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F A I T H's
Trial and Triumph :
O R, T H E
Soul's Conflict
W I T H
T E M P T A T I O N,

And Rejoicing when Victory is obtained through

Faith in Christ.

Being the Substance of Several Sermons
Preached at *Rainford*, and at some Lectures
at *Bolton* in the *Moores* in *Lancashire*,

James

F R O M

Brother

J O H N xx. 28.

By J. W. Pastor of the Congregation at *Rainford*.

And now Published for Publick Use and Benefit.

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THE
STATION
CHURCH

The Epistle Dedicatory to my
beloved People at *Rainford*,
and my beloved Friends at
and about *Bolton*, to whom
these Sermons were First
Preached.

Dearly Beloved,

MANY, upon one Account or other, Dedicate
their Writings to some particular and spe-
cial Friends. You in general are my be-
loved Friends, to whom, as to one Body, I
Dedicate this Subject which I have Preached among
you, and that without distinction of Persons, as Patrons,
for these Reasons. (1.) The right of Primogeniture
belongs to you all, to whom they have been Preached first.
(2.) The particular Pastoral Relation that I stand in
to you my People at Rainford; among whom, Christ
who called me to the Work of the Ministry, hath
fixed my Post for these Thirty Years last past; and
whose Souls have been committed to my Charge as
your Pastor. And for some Years last past hath given
me the Liberty and Opportunity to Preach many publick
Lectures at Bolton, wherein, according to the mean and
weak Talent bestowed by God upon me. I have not ex-
ercised my self in the deep and profound Mysteries of

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the Gospel, (which I have left to abler Persons and Pens) nor in Controversial Points, that might gender Strifes, and increase Heats and Animofities among Persons of different Sentiments and Perswasions, but in the things which make for Peace and mutual Edification. I have now sent this Subject abroad into the World in a most plain and homely Dress, because it is Milk for Babes, and not strong Meat for strong Men, though I hope it is the sincere Milk of the Word, which through God's Blessing may Effect your growth in Grace, in Faith and Love. The Milk of the Breast is not ordinarily Sugar'd, but most naturally Nourisheth as it comes warm from the Breast; and so the simplicity and plainness of the Gospel proves often, though not so Palatable, yet as Nourishing to the Souls of true Believers, as more curious and richly dressed Dainties: For the less there is seen of Man in it, the more is there seen of the Wisdom and Power of God, who by the foolishness of Preaching saves such as believe. And if it fall into the Hands of more Strong, Learned and Able Christians, it may, upon one account or other, be as Pleasant and Profitable to them, as their own rich and better furnished Tables. It was the saying of a most Learned and Able Divine, that he would hear the weakest as well as ablest Minister Preach, for some way or other he could get good by them; either he could learn some particular Note from them, which he had not taken notice of before, or he could call to mind some Truth that had slipped his Memory; or if there was nothing further to be got by such a Sermon, yet he could learn Patience; some of these probably may be learned by this Discourse. (3.) I Dedicate this to you all without distinction of Persons, because there is something or other in the several Particulars of it, that may reach and suit your particular Cases. There

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are some, who though they have been frequent Hearers of the Word, yet have utterly shut the Doors of their Hearts against it, and through Ignorance and Love to their Sins and Lusts, and wretched Carelesness of their Souls, neither know what Temptations are, nor whence they come, nor what a deplorable Condition they bring those Souls into that are overcome by them, but go on wilfully in their Slavery to Satan, the World, and their own Lusts. These, if they will but seriously read and meditate upon this Subject, may find something that may discover their dangerous and deplorable Condition, and put them upon Repentance, and seeking God, and resisting Temptation before it be too late; some have been Hearers of the Word, and thought themselves hereby in a safe Condition, but have not been Doers of the Word, have neither learned nor practiced what hath been Preached to them. These may learn that practice is the end of Hearing, and that it is not the Hearers, but the Doers of the Will of God that shall be justified. It is not the Knowledge, but the Overcomers of Temptations that shall be saved; we cannot charge God as our Tempter, nor lay the blame wholly at Satan's Door, (who can only tempt us objectively) but our own Lusts that have enticed us, and drawn us into Sin, and that many times knowingly and wilfully; and therefore our Destruction is of our selves; for where true Faith is, there will be a vigorous resistance of Temptation, and a real Victory over it at last; yea, Faith by the Word quencheth the fiery Darts, both of Satan and our own Lusts. Some again have made a flourishing Profession of Religion, but have wofully Cooled, Decayed and Apostatized; and, however, they may be now settled upon their Lees, and Conscience at last laid to sleep, yet doubtless they have had many strong Conflicts between the

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Flesh and their own Enlightned Consciences, before they could be brought to that secure and stupid Temper they are now arrived at; for the Heart must have a time to be hardened in Sin; and where Faith loseth the Day, there Sin and Lust gets it; the weaker that Faith grows, the stronger will Temptation prove in its Assault; and these will have no Cause of Triumph at last. Some again have met with sore and strong Temptations, and for a considerable time have made strong resistance, but either by the Strength and Violence, or the long Continuance of Temptation; their Faith being weak and weary, their Flesh and Heart is ready to fail them, and in Despondency are ready to give up all for lost. Now here such have Rules and Means to support and strengthen their Faith, and to encourage them to persevere in the Conflict, with assured Hope of Victory at the last, and Cause of Triumph therein. Some again have seemed to Conquer a present Temptation, and hereupon they have been ready to boast of their Victory, whereas Temptation may but have withdrawn it self for a time, that it may return with more Violence when it finds a new Opportunity, and the Root is not truly mortified in the Heart and Affections. Here ye may find something to cause you to rejoyce with trembling, and to keep a watchful Eye upon your own Hearts, that ye may Triumph indeed, when full and final Victory is obtained at last. Thus you see here is Food of all sorts, and Physick for all Distempers, and therefore I have Dedicated this Treatise to you all. (4.) I Dedicate this to you all, without mentioning any in particular, lest any should think me partial in what I Write, or that I neglect some, while I take particular notice of others; whereas I am heartily concerned for the Welfare of all your Souls, and do heartily wish that all you may come to the Knowledge of

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of the Truth, and be saved. I scatter the Seed among you, and leave the Spirit of God (whose peculiar Work it is) to Water, to Bless the springing of it, and make it fruitful. (5.) The Decays of Nature, and Infirmities of Old Age, accompanied with some aggravating Circumstances and particular Distempers, tell me that my time of stay among you is not likely long to continue, they come so fast and forceably upon me. And therefore as good Hezekiah, upon the Sentence of approaching Death, was advised to set his House in order; so I have Compiled and Committed to the Press this Subject, that I may leave it as a Legacy to you when I am gone. And though I may say with the Apostle Peter, Silver and Gold have I none; but such as I have I give and bequeath to you, and earnestly wish that it may have the same Influence upon you, (though not in so Miraculous a way) that his Word had upon the poor Cripple, Arise and walk; the same Spirit must do this that did that, though not in the same Miraculous way. (6.) By the publishing of this Subject, and delivering it into your Hands to be seriously and deliberately Weighed and Meditated upon, you may come to have a more deep Impression of it upon your Hearts, than in the transient hearing of it. However, it will be a means to quicken and revive it in your Memories; and many times the Words of Men are taken more notice of, and more seriously consider'd when a Man is dead, than when he lived and spake them. If your Memories fail, you may have recourse to your Book, and thereby revive your Memories: Nay further, ye may now read them to your Children and Families, which may be a means to quicken them to Watchfulness against Temptations, and strengthen them in their Conflict against them; who knows but that some secure and sleepy Sinner in your Family may hereby be Awaked, and brought to Repentance

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and Conversion; and therefore I hope that this Token and Legacy of my Love to your Souls may be several ways profitable to you, which is my hearty Wish and Prayer for you, that ye may not be Tempted in any Case above what ye are able, and that ye may get full and final Victory over all Temptations at last, and therein may for ever Triumph in Christ through Faith in him, in whom ye have obtained Victory. However, whether ye will hear, or whether ye will forbear, this will be a standing Record either for or against you in the great Day of reckoning, and will be a Witness for me, that I am clear from your Blood. And know this, that however this Discourse take with you now, it will be my Crown and Rejoicing in that Day of Christ, if I can meet you, or any of you, at the Right Hand of Christ, Triumphing in your Victory over all Temptations through Faith in Christ. It will then witness for me, that it hath not been yours, but you, your Soul's Eternal Happiness and Salvation that I have chiefly sought after and labour'd for. And as I have (according to my weak Capacity) endeavour'd to do my part, your part is Reading, Meditating, Prayer and Practice, that so through the Blessing of God ye may come to Triumphant Glory at last, which is and shall be the Prayer of the true Lover of your Souls,

J. B.

I will only recommend to your serious Reading and Perusal, what the Apostle Writes as his End and Design in Writing the Second Epistle of Peter, Chap. 1. 12, to 16. which you may read at large in your Bibles. and according to the Grace of God bestow'd upon me, is my Design in the whole of this Subject.

Christian

To the Christian Reader.

Christian Reader,

WE are told that we ought not to eat our Morsels alone, but to deal our Bread to the Hungry, and cast our Bread upon the Waters, and to invite the Poor and Hungry to our Feasts; therefore I have made bold to publish this Treatise to the World, hoping it may meet with some poor hungry Soul, whose Condition may require such a Word, as well as those to whom it was Preached. And such an one I suppose and hope that thou art, for I design it for poor, mean and hungry Souls; not as a Dish to please the Curious Palates of such as abound in all Plenty and Variety, but to such as really Hunger and Thirst after Righteousness, whose present Condition is such that they find a real want of such Bread of Life (though never so plainly dressed) as this is. I hope it is sound and wholesome Country Fare, though it be not Sauced and Garnished, as thou mayst meet with at more Rich Tables. And sometimes those that in Ordinary are fed with more Rich and Choice Delicates, may yet have a mind to taste of plain Country Fare. Sometimes Persons may Surfeit upon too high and rich Diet, which may breed Distempers in them; but there is not the like danger in plain and homely Diet; few will have so keen an Appetite to this as to Surfeit upon, especially in this Age wherein Persons are grown more curious in Palates than ordinary: I suppose thee to be one that eatest to live, and that lives not to eat. I hope there is wholesome, nourishing Food in what I set before thee, which may refresh thy Spirits, and strengthen thee for thy Work, and in thy Journey towards Heaven; and therefore I desire thee to taste and eat of it, and thine own Experience, upon Trial, will make thee a Competent Judge of what Nourishment it will afford thee, if thou wilt but make a due
and

To the Christian Reader.

and right use of it. I desire thee therefore not to scorn at and despise it, nor entertain a prejudice in thy Mind against it, but Candidly, Charitably and Seriously read it, bearing with the Weakness and Infirmities of the Author; meditate also seriously upon it, mix it with Faith, follow the Reading of it with Prayer for the Blessing of God upon it, apply it to thy Soul's particular Case and Necessity, and follow the Rules and Directions of it, and duly Examine and Try thy Heart and Ways by it. And that thou mayest Reap much Benefit by it, is, and shall be, the Prayer of an unworthy Servant of Christ, and thy Servant for Christ's sake and the Gospel, though unknown by Face to thee,

J. B.

This comes to thee in an Earthen Vessel, that the less there is of Man, the more the Wisdom and Power of God may be seen in it; and he may have the whole Glory, who by the Foolishness of Preaching saves all those that believe. It is his Glory and thy Soul's Good, and not mine own Commendation that I design herein, and pray for. But as the Law was content with a pair of Turtle Doves, or two Young Pigeons, where richer Sacrifices were not to be had, and Christ commends the poor Widow's Two Mites, this being all her Substance, above the rich Gifts cast into the Treasures of God by them who give of their Abundance; so I hope these Two Mites will be graciously accepted of Christ, who expects according to what he gives, and not according to what he gives not: So I would beg of thee charitably to accept of, and make the best use thou canst of these plain Truths that here I offer to thee.

He that hath told us in his Word, that through manifold Tribulations and Temptations we must enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; that he who hath endured so much for our sakes, expects that we should take up

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our Cross and follow him, and suffer with him, if we expect to be glorified with him; yea, makes it a Sign and Token of Sonship, if we endure Chastisements; he having given us so many Premonitions in this Case, we may expect not to be free, if we belong to him. I therefore supposing thee to be one of these that belong to Christ, can think no other, but that thou hast thy Trials and Temptations as well as others, for none are absolutely free.

I therefore have cast this Net into the Sea, not knowing what Fish it will bring up; possibly thou mayest be one that God hath a design to do good unto, by sending it to thee; I have sometimes heard it said, such a Sermon had been proper for such a Person, if he had been there to have heard it; this is often but an excuse to keep off the Sence of the Word from their own Hearts, and that they think they know more of others Circumstances, than really they do of their own. But this I am sure of, that where God designs any special Good to any particular Person, he either by his Providence brings them to the place when it is Preached, or by one means or other conveys it to them. Upon this account though it was not Preached to thee, yet this Subject being published to the World, may fall into thine Hand for some special Use and Advantage; and therefore despise it not, but give it the serious reading, and beg of God for his Blessing upon it, for some special Benefit by it.

Though I design it chiefly for mean and weak Christians, yet since the best of Saints may be exposed to the greatest Temptations and strongest Trials, there may possibly be found something in it that may be of particular Use and Benefit to thee; and though it come from a weak Hand, and in a mean Dress, and many things in it might be better, more aptly and methodically expressed, yet by this Wisdom and Improvement in thy Meditations, it may be abundantly mended and added to.

There-

To the Christian Reader.

Therefore I would not preclude thee from reading of it, how Strong and Eminent soever thou art; but pity and pray for thy poor weak Servant, the Author hereof, and bless God for, and faithfully improve the larger Talents that he hath bestowed upon thee: For he that had but Two Talents, and improved them, was as well accepted of, and rewarded by his Lord, as he that had Five.

The particular Reasons of my Publication of this I have given in the Epistle Dedicatory, and therefore shall not repeat them here; but (Courteous Reader, into whose Hands these Papers shall come) I commend thee to God, and the Word of his Grace, which is able to Build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them that are sanctified, and to keep you by his Power and Grace through Faith unto Salvation, heartily begging that a plentiful Blessing of God may accompany this his Word, for Health, Nourishment and Comfort to thy Soul, is, and shall be, the earnest Prayer of him, who though unknown by Face to thee, yet hopes that he belongeth to the same Family, and is concerned for the Soul's Welfare; who is thy Fellow Traveller through this Wilderness to the Canaan of Everlasting Rest, and thy Fellow Labourer in the Faith and Patience of the Gospel, and desirous in my Place and Capacity to help thee forward in that Work and Journey; and therefore thy Servant in and for Christ our Common Lord and Master,

J. B.

I

*The Conflict and Conquest : Or,
The Trial and Triumph of
Faith : Being the Substance
of several Sermons, preached
at Rainford, from*

J O H N xx. 28.

*And Thomas answered, My Lord, and my
God.*

1. **T**HE Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body is a great Article of our Creed ; and as to the clear and distinct Knowledge and Belief of it, so much the more an Article of Faith, as it hath only, or at least chiefly, Divine Revelation, and not Humane Reason, to build and bottom Faith upon. Some dark and doubtful Notions the Heathens might have of it, but so far as they wanted Divine Revelations or Knowledge some way or other conveyed to them, from thence they must needs be Ignorant of this Article of Faith, which hath its dependance solely upon

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Divine

Divine Testimony. And therefore when the Apostle would prove this Doctrine against Saducees, and other Cavillers, he proves it from Arguments of a Divine and Supernatural Nature, and Inferences drawn
 1 Cor. 15. from thence. This Doctrine was so generally Assented to by all, to whom the Divine Revelation came, that there were few that doubted of it; and therefore when Christ spoke to *Martha* of the Resurrection of her Brother *Lazarus*, she owns it as a certain Truth, that he should Rise again at the general Resurrection. But when Christ spake of his present Resurrection, by a Miracle, this she doubted of, and could not believe till it was done, as appears by her Words at the Grave, *Lord, by this time he Stinketh*; and therefore she thought it both in vain and loathsome to remove the Stone. Our blessed Saviour had in his Life-time been Instructing and Informing his Disciples of his Sufferings, Death and Burial at *Jerusalem*, and his Rising again on the Third Day. They heard what he said; but this concerning his Rising again on the Third Day, they understood not; it was above the Reach of their Knowledge and Faith, and they were afraid to ask further about it. And therefore now when he was Risen, and had appeared to *Mary*, and she and the other Women declaring what they had seen and heard, their Report seemed but as an Idle Story in the Ears of the Apostles; they did not Believe it.

The

The Jews had a general Notion of the Temporal Reign and Visible Prosperity and Glory of the *Messiah*, and this Notion was so generally received, that even the Disciples of Christ expected it: And hence arose this Question which the Apostles put to Christ, *Acts* 1. 6. *Wilt thou at this time Restore again the Kingdom to Israel?* And the Disputes among them, which of them should be greatest.

When Christ was Crucify'd, Dead and Buried, some doubted whether he was the true *Messiah* or no; being so much disappointed in their Expectation of a Glorious Temporal Reign of Christ upon Earth, and that they should Reign with him, as appears in the Discourse of the Two Disciples going to *Emmaus*. We trusted that it had been he which should have been the *Messiah*, *quasi dicat*, we expected this, but now our hopes seem to be frustrated, for he is Crucify'd, Dead and Buried; and though some Women have told us that he is Risen, yet we cannot believe it. The Disciples Doubts concerning this Resurrection were not resolv'd till he in Person appear'd to them. *Thomas* being absent at his first Appearance, they tell him of it: But so strong was his Unbelief, that neither their Word, nor the Report of all the World, should satisfy him, unless he might both see and feel that it was very Christ indeed, who was Crucify'd, his Hands pierced with the Nails, whereby he was nailed to the Cross, and that he might

Luke 24.
21.

might put his Hand into his side, which was pierced with the Spear. Christ at his next appearance Cures *Thomas* his Unbelief, and Satisfies his Curiosity, and Gives him a Rebuke for his Unbelief. And this we have in the Verse before the Text. And now as his Faith seemed to be sunk to the lowest Ebb, till Christ had gratify'd his Sences to be a means of the Restoration and Victory of his Faith, in a most high Rapture and Extacy of his Faith he cries out, *My Lord, and my God.* The like Rapture we have in *Mary*, when Christ made himself known to her, by calling her by Name.

There are several things in these Words of *Thomas*, and the Context worthy of serious Observation. As, (1.) That Jesus Christ is truly and essentially God in all Points, equal to the Father. (2.) That Christ is King and Lord of Heaven and Earth; all Power is Committed into his Hand as Mediator. (3.) That it is the Property of true Faith, not only to give a general Assent unto these great Articles of Faith, but to appropriate Christ unto themselves, and to make him their own, that they may say with *Thomas* here, *My Lord, and my God.* He not only confesseth him to be God and Lord, but he chuseth him for his God and Lord, and claims an Interest in him as such. These I shall pass by. There is a fourth Consideration which I design to speak to, taken both from the Text and the Context. In the Context we see how

how low *Thomas* his Faith was sunk, and Unbelief prevailed, so that no ordinary thing would prevail with him to believe the Resurrection of Christ, but he seems resolute in his Unbelief: But Christ having raised him up to his Feet, and overcome his Doubts, now in an Extasie of Joy and Triumph he cries out, *My Lord, and my God.* Hence I observe, That the lower Ebb, or greater Foil, that Faith is brought to in and under Temptation and Trial, or the greater Difficulties that it is put to Grapple with, the higher will it mount in Triumph, when it hath once got the full Victory.

Thomas his Faith was grievously shaken, and Unbelief prevailed in a very high Degree: But Christ having recovered his Faith, by removing all his Doubts, now Faith mounts, and in a very high degree triumphs in the Victory over Unbelief.

Here then we have the Trial and Triumph of Faith; what a low pass it may be brought to in the Trial and Conflict; and how high it mounts in Triumph, when Victory is obtained. *Thomas* his Faith was not so low in the Trial, but it as highly Triumphs in the Victory. Many instances might be given of the like Nature. See the Psalmist's Case. The prosperity of the wicked, and sufferings of the People of God, caused him so far to doubt of the Love and Favour of God to his Saints, that he was ready to think that it was in vain that he had been so Religious; but

Psalm 73.

upon the Resolution of his Doubts, and Victory of Faith, you see how highly he is transported, and fully satisfy'd that he had made the best Choice. *Israel's Faith* was tried to the uttermost, when upon *Moses* coming to *Pharoah*, their Tasks were doubled instead of being delivered from them: And especially when hemmed in on every Hand at the Red-Sea, their Enemies pursuing them, and no escape but through the Sea: But when delivered, what a Song of Praise and Triumph have we? *Exod. 15.* When *Abraham's Faith* and Obedience had been tried in offering up his Son *Isaac*, and God had Countermanded him, and provided a Ram instead of *Isaac*, *Abraham* calls the Name of the Place *Jehovah Jirah*. The Lord will see, or provide according to the Answer which he had given to his Son, when he asked, Where is the Lamb, &c. God will provide himself a Lamb; and when this Faith was turn'd into Fruition in the Effect; now he Triumphs and sets up a Trophy of what he had believed. *Hezekiah's Faith* and Prayer having prevailed for the lengthning out of his Life, he sings a Song of Triumph. How doth *Hannah* Rejoice and Triumph, when God had heard and answered her Prayer? How doth *David* Triumph, when God had given him Victory over all his Enemies? *Psal. 18.* These Instances may suffice for the present.

This Doctrine naturally divides it self into two Branches. (1.) The Trial.
(2.) The

v. 14.

v. 8.

Isai. 38.

9, &c.

1 Sam. 2.

(2.) The Triumph of Faith. (1.) As to the Trial of Faith, it supposeth that the best of Saints may have their Faith tried to the utmost: Yea, so far as that both Flesh and Heart may for the present fail them; Faith may be foully foiled, though not wholly overcome. Before I speak to this, let me premise, That it is not every thing that is called Faith, or taken for Faith by Men in the World, that is the Faith that here we speak of; for there are several Sorts, or Kinds of Faith, that will not endure, or hold out in the Trial. As,

(1.) There is an Hypocritical Faith. When Persons profess with their Mouths to believe that which they do not really believe in their Hearts, they draw nigh to God in Profession, when their *Hearts are not right with him, nor are they stedfast in his Covenant.* Psal. 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. *With the Tongue Confession is made; but with the Heart Man believes to Righteousness;* now when Tongue and Heart go not together, this pretended Faith will not abide the Trial.

(2.) There is an Ignorant Faith. When Persons profess to believe, but neither know what they believe, nor upon what Grounds they believe it, this the Papist call an Implicit Faith. They must believe what the Church believeth, and yet neither know what the Church believeth, nor upon what Grounds the Church believe it; and so they believe damnable Doctrines; and thus but too many profess to believe the Articles of the Christian Faith, and yet know not the meaning of

any of them ; thus many repeat the Lord's Prayer but understands nothing of what is therein prayed for. Thus many profess the Scriptures to be the Word of God, but neither Read nor Understand them.

See Isai. 27.
11.

Now this kind of Faith will never abide the Trial, so as to be approved of God, or be any real Cause of Triumph in us.

(3.) There is a Faith of Assent, which is grounded upon some kind of Knowledge in the Understanding, but hath little or no Influence upon the Will or Practice. They are not wholly Ignorant of the things which they profess to believe, but yet they do not with the Heart or Will believe them so as to Obey and Practise them ; they do not believe unto Righteousness ; this kind of Faith is but too Common where the Gospel is spread and professed. They pretend to believe one thing, but practice the quite contrary. Their Faith is an Head and Notional Faith, but not a Heart and Practical Knowledge ; their Judgment assents, but their Will doth not fully consent to what they profess to believe. This Faith will not abide the Trial, but is shaken with every Trial.

Mat. 13.

(4.) There is a temporary Faith, which hath not only place in the Understanding ; but in some measure for a time affects the Will, but yet abideth not, as was the Case of the Stony-Ground Hearers. They heard the Word with Joy, and for some time, while Conviction continued warm upon their Consciences, they owned and professed it, but when Convictions Cool-
ed

ed, and Trials came, they were offended. This is a Faith that will not hold out to the end ; nay, when these Apostatize, there is little hopes of their Recovery. This is an unstable Faith ; such a Man is unstable in all his ways, even wavering, *Jam. 1. 6, 7, 8.* Heb. 6. 4, 5, 6.

(5.) There is a weak Faith (if I may so call it) that begets in a Man a velety or faint Wishing, but not a *Voluntas*, or full consent of the Will, so as to withstand and overcome all Temptations to the Contrary, and using all Endeavours to Obey and Practice what they seem to wish for. This was *Baalans*'s Wish, Oh ! That I die the Death of the Righteous, but would not be at the pains, nor could he prevail for the full Consent of his Will to live the Life of the Righteous ; and this is the Case of most wicked Men. They would be saved, but they cannot get the full Consent of the Will to live such Lives, and take such Methods that lead to Salvation.

(6.) There is a Lazy, Sluggish and Unactive Faith ; such as would have all done for them to their Hand, but will be at the pains to do nothing themselves. An Antinomian Faith, that would have all done to their Hand by Christ, but would be obliged to do nothing for him, or in Obedience to him and his Law, but only what they do in point of Gratitude. The Apostle tells us, that this *Faith without Works is dead*, being alone ; for Works suitable to the Nature of Faith, must Evidence the Truth of our Faith. The generality of wicked

wicked Men are practical Antinomians in this Case, believing that Christ will save them, how wicked and prophane soever they be. But none of these pretended kinds of Faith, are that Faith which here we are speaking of: For however Persons may Flatter and Bolster themselves up with these Perswasions, yet none of these will abide a thorough Trial, so as to administer matter of Triumph at last, when God comes either here, or at Death and Judgment, to open their Eyes; but true Faith is quite of another Nature; though it may be tried to the utmost, and sometimes faint and be foiled in the Trial for a time; yet it overcomes, and gets the Victory at last. It may be said of this Faith, as of *Gad*, a Troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at last: See the Churches Exercise of Faith under sore Trials. *Though I fall, I shall rise; though I sit in Darkness, the Lord shall be a Light unto me.* Though God had sorely Tried his People, and brought them through Fire and Waters, yet he held their Soul in Life, and brought them out into a large Place, and for this they Rejoice and Triumph. *Job* was sorely Tried, and his Faith at so low an Ebb, that he looks upon God as his Enemy; as one that dealt Cruelly and Severely with him: And yet at other times his Faith is so raised, that he saith, That though God kill him, yet he will trust in him: Yea, whatever he suffers, yet his Redeemer lives, and he shall see him for himself,

Micah 7.
8, 9.
Psal. 66.
and follow-
ing Verses.

Job 19.25.

himself, and not another, though his Reins be consumed in him. *Peter's Trial* was great, and gave him a foul Fall, but through Christ's Intercession his Faith recovered its footing again. Nay, many times the more Faith God gives, the greater Trials he puts them upon, as he did *Abraham*. The Apostle tells us that God tempteth no Man, *i. e.* he doth not call or encourage any Man to Sin: This proceeds from another Cause, from Satan, and a *Jam. 1. 13.* Man's own Lust; but yet God is said to *14.* tempt *Abraham. i. e.* to try his Faith and Obedience: Not that God was Ignorant of the Faith which *Abraham* had; but by Works of Obedience, and Fruits of Faith, he might make manifest the truth and strength of *Abraham's* Faith. And so *Job's* Trials were upon the same account, to confute Satan of his false Accusation, and to make *Job* a standing pattern of Faith and Patience to the end of the World. Let us therefore a little consider what this Faith is whereof we speak, and is different from these sorts of false and pretended Faith beforementioned, and how we may know it.

It is a true, justifying, saving Faith, wrought in the Heart of the Believer by the Spirit of God, accompanying the Reading and Hearing the Word, *Faith comes by Rom. 10. Hearing, and Hearing by the Word of God. 17.* Knowledge is chiefly seated in the Head or Understanding; but the Heart is the Seat *Rom. 10. of Faith. With the Heart Man believes 10.*

unto Righteousness. When a Man not only assents to the Truth of what is spoken, but he consents to it with the Will and Affections, and gives Obedience to it so, that believing and heartily obeying the Word of God are in Scripture Sence much what the same; *To whom ye yeild your selves Servants to obey, his Servants you are.*

Rom. 6. 16.

Faith hath the whole Word of God for its general Object, Precepts as well as Promises; whatever God hath revealed in his Word, either concerning Himself, and Will, or our Duty, is the Object of our Faith; for he that comes to God must believe both his Being and Bounty, that he is, *i. e.* what he hath in every point revealed himself to be, and his Bounty a plentiful Rewarder of them that diligently seek him; he must have respect to all God's Commandments; his Heart must be inclin'd to perform them always, even to the End. He must believe God's Sovereignty over us, and to impose his Will upon us as the highest Law, requiring our absolute and indispenfible Obedience to the whole of it; he believes God's Wisdom, Power, All-sufficiency and Faithfulness, and that in *Christ Jesus*; *all the Promises are Yea and Amen*, passed into an irrevocable Will and Testament by the Death of Christ; so that God, who cannot Lie, will faithfully fulfil what he hath spoken for the Covenant of Redemption, between the Father and the Son, cannot be broken;

Heb. 11. 6.
Psal. 119.
6. v. 112.

broken ; Christ having finished the Work which his Father gave him to do.

Hereupon the Believer embraceth and closeth with whole Christ, as Prophet, Priest and King, upon the Terms of the Gospel Covenant, receives the whole Doctrine of the Gospel as the Truth being revealed by Christ, the great Prophet of God, in his Word ; he wholly relies upon Christ as his great Propitiation, who by his offering up himself upon the Cross, *hath for ever perfected those that* Heb. 10. *are sanctified.* Christ having finished the 14. Work that God gave him to do, he by the Merit of his Death hath perfected the Redemption and Salvation of all these that by Faith in him are sanctified.

The Believer also embraceth Christ as his King and Lord, (God as Mediator, having advanced him to be so.) And therefore the Laws of Christ are in all things the Rule of his Obedience ; and these be- Joh. 3. 20. *ing revealed in the Gospel, he brings all* 21. *his Deeds to this Touchstone to be tried, whether they be wrought in God or not.*

And hence ariseth a Fiducial Recumbency upon God and his Word. The Believer in Obedience to the Law of Christ, keeps in the way of his Duty, minds that as his Work, and tries all his Works by the perfect Rule of the Word ; and trusts in and depends upon God for the fulfilling of what he hath promised, because *He is faithful that hath promised,* 1 Cor. 10. *and will not suffer him to be tempted above* 13. *what*

what he is able, but with the Temptation will make a way for his escape.

2 Tim. 1. Hence, saith the Apostle, I know whom
12. I have believed, &c. and for this Cause he durst adventure upon any Suffering. Hence David having set the Lord always before him, *i. e.* to bless him in the way of his Duty, he believed that God was always at his Right-hand to help and support him, to guide and direct him, and therefore he should never be moved.

Eph. 6.16. By this Faith the Believer is shielded
John 5.4. and defended against all the Fiery Darts
John 16. of the Devil; by this he overcomes the
33. World, and all the Temptations thereof,
Heb. 11. knowing and believing that Christ hath
26. overcome the World for him; he hath his Eye upon the Recompence of Reward set before him in another World. This enabled the Apostles and Followers of Christ to go through all Difficulties and Sufferings without Fainting, looking at the unseen things of another World, and
2 Cor. 4. knowing that these *light Afflictions, which*
16, 17.18. *were but for a Moment, should work out*
Heb. 12.2. *for them a far more Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory*; yea, Christ himself had an Eye to this in his Sufferings; for *the Joy that was set before him, he endured the Cross, despising the Shame.*

Now such Faith as this it is that we are speaking of; and in some it is stronger, and in others weaker, but in all true Believers it is to be found in a greater or less Degree. And even those that have the
most

most Faith, may have it tried to the utmost; and in the Trial, though it be more precious than Gold, yet the Believer may for some time receive some sore Foils, though it be not utterly destroyed.

God may suffer it thus to be tried, and that for these Reasons. Eph. 2. 8.
Heb. 12. 2.

(1.) Because Faith is the Gift of God. And he may well Try and Exercise his own Grace which he hath bestowed, especially considering that he is both the Author and Finisher of our Faith. And this he may Try and Exercise as far as he pleaseth; for it is a Talent that he intrusts the Believer to Trade with, and not to lye Idle. And therefore where he gives much, he may look for much again; where he gives Five Talents, he may expect Five more; and when he gives but Two, he only expects Two more. God gave much Grace to Paul, and his Grace was not bestowed in Vain, but he *Laboured more abundantly than they all*. God never bestows any Grace in what Measure or Degree soever, but he will find him full Employment for it. If Job be a Perfect and Upright Man, so that there is none like him, God will find Work enough to Try and Exercise it to the utmost. Mar. 25.
Luke 12. 48.

(2.) This Life is the time and the place for the Trial and Exercise of Faith. It will not be of such Use to us in another World; it is here that the Just must live by Faith; we are saved by Hope, (which is Heb. 10. 27, 28.

Rom. 8.

24.

1 Per. 1. 5.

Eph. 6. 16.

Heb. 11.

is the Daughter of Faith) we are both supported under present Difficulties and Troubles here, and are carried through all by Faith unto Salvation.

(3.) Because the Believer's Life is a continual Warfare, wherein Faith is his chiefest Armour and Weapon. It is his Shield to quench all the Fiery Darts of the wicked one, it is his chief Weapon whereby he weilds and makes use of the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God ; it is a Weapon which (if well managed) the Devil himself with all his Forces cannot overcome, which he assayed when he tried *Job* ; and yet *Job* overcame them all at last ; nay, some, the Wounds that Satan gives them in the Contest, how Mortal soever they may seem to be, yet are Cured at last by Faith. *Peter* was sore wounded, but Faith brought him to Repentance, and Cured his Wound at last.

Now Faith is our Principal Grace and Weapon in our Spiritual Warfare, and helps to obtain Victory at last in many Respects.

(1.) Faith discovers where our Strength lyes, and from whom we must expect help and support in all our Trials. It puts us upon looking upon Christ the Captain of our Salvation, who himself was made *Perfect through Sufferings*, and was Tempted in all things as we are, that he might know how to succour us when we are Tempted ; and who *hath overcome*
the

Heb. 2.
18.

the World, that in him we might have Peace, though we have Tribulation in the World. It shews that we must be strong in the Strength of the Lord, and the Power of his Might. That we must put on and exercise the whole Armour of God ; for we are kept by his Power through Faith unto Salvation ; not by Might, nor by Power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.

John 16.
33.

Eph. 6. 10,
Ec.

1 Pet. 1. 5.
Zech. 4. 6.

(2.) Faith takes hold of the Covenant and Promises which are sealed in the Blood of Christ ; and in him all the Promises are Yea and Amen. Faith is like Sampson's Locks, wherein his Strength lay ; not that his Strength lay in the Strength of his Hair ; but this being a Sacrament of his Covenant of a Nazarite, when these were cut his Strength departed from him ; so our Strength lyes not in our Faith it self, but this being a Condition of our Covenant, and the Hand whereby we take hold of and embrace the Covenant and Promises, while this stands firm and uncut, the Promises stand firm, and Christ, in whom they are Yea and Amen, will faithfully fulfil them to the believing Soul.

Therefore it is Faith that must abide the Principal Shock in Temptation, must either keep us from falling, or raise us up when fallen. It must defend us as a Shield from the Mortal stroak of Satan's Temptations. And as an offensive Weapon it must help us to make a right use of the Sword of the Spirit, whereby we must quench

Mat. 4. quench all Satan's Fiery Darts; by this Christ vanquished Satan, it is written. By this *Joseph* repulſed and withſtood his Miſtreſs's Solicitations. *How ſhall I do this great Wickedneſs, and Sin againſt God?* By this *David* kept himſelf from killing *Saul*, when he had him in his Power. This was the Iniquity that *David* kept himſelf from, *Pſal.* 18. 20. to 25.

(3.) Faith fetcheth ſupply and help from God by Prayer. It encourageth to Pray, and ſtrengthens the Hands in Prayer, enables the Soul to wreſtle with God.

Gen. 32. Thus it ſtrengthened *Jacob's* Hand, *I*
Exod. 32. *will not let thee go till thou haſt bleſſed me;*
10. he pleaded the Promiſe, *Thou which ſaid'ſt unto me, return, and I will bleſs thee.*

Thus *Moſes* wreſtled with God by Prayer, and was ſo powerful that God ſaid, *Let me alone.*

The like we may ſee in *David*, *Paul*, and divers others, there is no Contending againſt God, but we may Wreſtle with God by Faith and Prayer, and take hold of his Strength, and prevail. Faith is the Condition to which God hath promiſed to answer Prayer; the Exercise and Wreſtling of Faith will diſcover whether a Man be in good earneſt in what he Prays for, or not? Many Pray for ſuch things as they would not be heard in. As when wicked Men pray for Power againſt Sin, which they have no mind to part with:

Faith

Faith also discovers whether we come to God, as one upon whom we dare and do depend, and with whom we hope to prevail; and by this means strengthens the Believer's Hands to Persevere in Prayer, notwithstanding seeming Delays and Repulses. This strengthened the Hands of the Woman of Canaan to follow Christ, and renew her Request, notwithstanding seeming Repulses. And therefore, saith Christ, *O Woman! Great is thy Faith,* Mat. 15. *be it to thee even as thou wilt.* Thus 28. Christ often tried the Faith of these that came to him for Healing, as he did the Father that came to him for the Cure Mark 9. of his Son.

(4.) Faith humbles the Soul under the Sence of his own unworthiness, as it did Jacob, *I am less than the least of all thy Mercies;* and by this means causeth the Soul patiently to wait for the Salvation of God, and to stoop and submit to the Will and Pleasure of God. The trying of Faith works Patience; the further that God tries our Faith, the more Patience it works; and this works Experience, and Experience of God's Faithfulness at last; the more Hope it gives the Believer that he shall Reap if he Faint not, and this Hope maketh not ashamed. Thus it did in the Psalmist, *I waited patiently for the Lord,---he heard me,---brought my Feet out of the Mire, set them upon a Rock, and established my goings.* The further God tries

Gen. 32.
10.

Jam. 1. 3.
Rom. 5. 3.

Ps. 40. 1,
2.

tries our Faith, the larger Experience we have of his Faithfulness at last.

(5.) By the Trial of our Faith he makes it evident, that he dare trust us in further Work that he hath for us to do. When God picks some Persons out for some Extraordinary Work, he many times tries their Faith throughly, and thereby qualifies them for the Work he calls them unto. Thus he tried *Abraham's* Faith to the utmost, having great Work for him to do, and great Blessings to bestow upon him; and therefore having thus tried him, he saith, *I know Abraham*. By the Trial of *Joseph's* and *David's* Faith, God qualified them for, and made way for their Access to that Dignity, Office and Work, he had for them to do; he made it appear that they were Persons fitly qualified for the Work he intended to call them to.

Gen. 18.

19.

Gen. 22.

12.

Acts 13.

22.

(6.) It is by Faith that the Believer is made Valiant and Courageous in the Cause of God; and by the great Trial of his Faith it appears that he will stick at no Difficulty. The weakness of Faith dispirits the Christian, and fills him with distrustful Fears; but if Faith be in due Exercise, it will quench the most Fiery Darts of the wicked. Soldiers will grow Lazy, and of Effeminate Spirits, if they have no Exercise; but War Animates and Whets their Courage; and so doth the Exercise of Faith Embolden the Believer.

See

So what Heroick Spirits they had whose Faith was greatly tried and exercised.

(7.) God sometimes tries and exerciseth his Peoples Faith for the Encouragement and Strengthening the Hands of others ; a good Example goes far, a good Leader is a great Encouragement to those that follow him. The Apostle Exhorts not to let go our Confidence, which hath great Recompence of Reward, and therefore gives us a Catalogue of the Heroick Acts done through Faith by Believers. And then sets Christ before us as a Patern beyond all Parallel. And so may God deal with others.

Heb. 10.

35.

Heb. 11.

Heb. 12.2.

(8.) Hereby God stops the Mouths of wicked Opposers, who deride at the Believer, making God their Refuge ; and Confutes their Slandorous Accusations, that when the Believer is under Trial, say, *Where is their God.* By the Trial of *Job* God confirms his own Commendation of him, and confutes Satan's Lying and Slandorous Accusation of him. *Doth Job serve God for nought ; touch him, and he will Curse thee to thy Face.*

Psal. 14. 5,
6.

Psal. 42.

10.

Psal. 115.

Job 2, 3.

Job 1.

(9.) By the Trial of Faith the Believer's Faith is Encouraged and Strengthened. The more and further it is tried, the stronger is grows. For it gains further Experience of God's All-sufficiency and Faithfulness, and that his Promises are pure and firm, as Silver tried in the Fire. The *Psalmist* was under great Trials, and prays to God, and God hears him, and

Psal. 12. 6.

C

there-

Pfal. 116. therefore he would love God, call upon,
2. and trust in him as long as he lived.

(10.) The more Faith is tried, the more Glory doth God get by it: God doth try his Peoples Faith for the getting himself Glory by it, in bestowing such an Eminent Grace upon them, in supporting them by it under such strong Trials, and in giving the Victory through Faith; great and fiery Trials had God exercised his People under, and at last brought them out of; therefore they would abundantly Praise him, and pay their Vows. The support of a weak and feeble Creature, under strong and piercing Trials through Faith, brings much glory to God, both from themselves and others. How was God glorified by the Three Children in the Fiery Furnace, when through Faith they made so light a reckoning of the King's Command? How was God glorified by *Daniel* in the Lion's Den? The great Hardships and Difficulties that poor weak Creatures are carried through by Faith and Patience, exceedingly Exalt God's Name and Glory.

Dan. 3.
Dan. 6.

(11.) The Trial of the Believer's Faith, makes way for his higher degree of Glory. Therefore, (saith the Apostle) *We faint not, for these light Afflictions that endure but for a Moment, work for us a far more Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory.* Here is Glory, a Weight of Glory, an Eternal Weight of Glory; yea, an Exceeding,

ceeding, a far more Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory.

(12.) Sometimes God tries his Peoples Faith, to teach them to live by Faith, to believe and hope when outward Providences greatly threaten, and they have nothing but a naked Promise to depend upon; when all looks dark about them, and they have nothing but the Light of a Promise to depend upon, or give them Light. *Though the Fig-tree should not flourish, the Fruit of the Vine should fail, &c.* Heb. 3. 17, 18, 19. *yet I will rejoice in the Lord, and joy in the God of my Salvation.* This Trial and Living by Faith will put them upon Two Duties. (1.) Upon Watchfulness that their Faith fail not, or that they have it not to seek when they have occasion to make use of it, because they know not when, nor how soon that time may come, nor how great their Trial may be. (2.) It will put them upon Serious and Impartial Examination and Trial of their own Faith by the Word of God, whether it be of the right Stamp rightly grounded, and will abide the Trial or not?

(13.) Sometimes God tries his Peoples Faith, and that to the utmost; yea, sometimes to the shaking and foiling of their Faith for a time, to beat down their Pride and Self-confidence, as he did *Peter's*.

(14.) Sometimes God tries a Person's Faith, to make it appear whether it be really what he pretends it to be; he pretends to Faith, but when it comes to the

Mat. 7.

Trial it proves not what he pretends it to be. Some pretend that they trust in God, and have him for their Portion; but when it comes to Trial in particular Cases, it appears that the World is their God, and that they trust more in their Riches, Honours, or Worldly Interest, than in God. Nay, some in this Case may seem to go far, and yet be Hypocrites, and the deceit of their Hearts not be discovered, either to others or to themselves, till great Storms arise, and sharp Temptations come; and then it appears that their House was but Built upon the Sand by the greatness of its fall; therefore God brings such sharp Trials upon them.

Prov. 8.
31.

(15.) The strong Trials of Saints may arise from the Malice and Insigation of the Devil. (1.) Satan is a perfect hater of God and Man, and it vexeth him to Heart that there should be any Love and Friendship between God and Man, and envies that any should be more in favour with God than himself; we read that Jesus Christ, the Second Person in the Trinity, rejoiced *in the Habitable Parts of the Earth, and his Delights were with the Sons of Men*. He took more delight in them than in Angels; therefore it is supposed by some, that Pride and Envy were the First Sin of the fallen Angels. They grudged that Man should be preferred before them, and therefore tempted Man to fall; that so he might be as Cursed and Miserable as himself, and that God might lose the

the Honour of his Creation in making Man after the Image of God, as well as himself. And therefore the more the Image of God is repaired in any Believer through Christ, the more he hates him; and by all his Wiles and Temptations to draw him to Sin, and to cast him out of God's Favour. For this Cause he tempted Christ himself, though he knew him to be God as well as Man, that if possible he might make him incapable of being our Redeemer. For this Cause when God had so highly commended *Job* for his Piety and Integrity, he endeavours to persuade God to have another Opinion of him, and that it was only for his own Ends that he was seemingly so Religious. And so far as God gave him leave, he did not fail to try him to the uttermost. Thus we see *Balaam* (who was an Instrument of the Devil) when he could not Curse *Israel* by his Enchantments, adviseth *Balak* to draw them to their Idolatrous Feasts and Sacrifices, and there to be guilty both of Spiritual and Corporal Fornication, and hereby to break the Peace and League between God and them.

(2.) The more Eminent any Believer is in Faith and Holiness, the greater Adversary he is to Satan and his Kingdom, and destroying the Works of the Devil, and that in all Relations and Capacities, both in himself, and his Family, and Neighbourhood, and in all Capacities wherein God hath set him. He is an Hater of all

Sin, and Opposer of it where-ever he sees or meets with it. He is a real Lover of all Souls, and therefore endeavours to pluck them out of the Snares of the Devil, and bring them into the Kingdom of Christ.

Gen. 8.13. *Abraham* would not only be Religious himself, but endeavours that his Family

Job 1. 5. should be Religious also. *Job* would not only Fear God and Eschew Evil himself, but he endeavoured to sanctifie his Children. And for this Reason Satan hath a more bitter Envy and Hatred against these than others; and by his Temptations either to Cause them to fall, or to Divert them from this Zealous and Pious Work.

His Malice so out-ran his Reason, that he tempted Christ himself, and therefore though he could not overcome him in his Person, yet he hopes to overcome, or at least to wound him in his Members; for these are Sworn Enemies to Satan and his Kingdom; and the more Eminent they are, the more Mischief do they do to him and his Kingdom, and therefore he shoots his most Fiery Darts against them. And if he can give a Foil to them, the greater Wound doth he give to Christ, Himself and Kingdom; for these are the Glory and Crown of Christ's Kingdom, and bring more Glory to Christ than many others.

(3.) Satan knows that the Believer's Faith is his strongest Shield and Buckler; and therefore if he can strike this out of his Hand, he lays him open to all other Temptations; and therefore sets his strongest

strongest battering Rains against their Faith. Satan knows that the Believer stands not upon his own Legs, or the strength of any Inherent Grace in himself, but in the Strength of the Lord, and Power of his Might; and therefore takes hold of the Covenant and Promises, and thereby upon Christ himself, depending upon him and his All-sufficiency for Support and Success in all his Conflicts; now if Satan can but beat him off from his Trust in, and Dependence upon Christ by Faith and Prayer, he doubts not but to Conquer him. Therefore the more Eminent any one is in Faith, the more Vigorous is Satan in the Assaults of his Faith.

(4.) Satan is here most Busy, because these are his most Implacable Enemies; he can by no Means get them reconciled to him and his Kingdom, but will do their utmost to destroy his Interest in the World. They have such a Firm and Loyal Heart to Christ, that nothing can separate them from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus. This Bond of Amity between Christ and them is so firmly knit, that nothing can break or lose it. Rom. 8. 39.

(5.) Satan knows that these strong Champions will not be overcome by Small-shot, and therefore he sets his strongest Artillery against these; small Temptations will be no Temptations to these, they will but despise them. Had David been no better Armed against Goliath than a Sling and Stone, Goliath's disdain of him

him had been to some purpose; but coming in the Name of the Lord of Hosts, *Goliath* was not able to withstand him; if Satan can but overcome these Champions, he doubts not but many others will fall with them, as the whole Host of the *Philistians* did, when *David* had Slain *Goliath*, in the Name of the Lord of Hosts. Therefore Satan must Assault these with his strongest and most wilely Temptations. He must well Bait his Hook, for these Birds are not caught with Chaff. He hath had long and frequent Experience of this, and therefore called the Old Serpent. You see what Force he every way brought against *Job*. If he fail in his Design herein, his own Kingdom gets the greater foil, as it did in the Trial of *Job*. These are they that in some Sence turn the World upside down by their Valiant Attempts and Success: They turn it from what Satan hath made it, into what God made it at first, by pulling down Satan's Usurped Kingdom, and setting up the Rightful Kingdom of Christ. And though he cannot destroy this Kingdom which is everlasting, and the Gates of Hell shall never prevail against it, yet he endeavours to weaken it as much as he can, and reduce Christ's Followers to as small a number as may be, and therefore strikes as much at the Pillars of it as he can.

(6.) Satan is the more intent upon this Business, by how much he knows that his time is but short. It is but a short

short time before he must be Chained up, and cast into the Lake. It is but a short time e'er Believers must be taken up out of his reach into Glory, whither he cannot come to tempt them any more. Nay, it is but a short time that God will suffer him to tempt and try them. God hath limited him in this, as well as other things. *The Rod of the Wicked shall not rest upon the Back of the Righteous.* Rev. 20. 10. Psal. 125. 3.

Though Sorrow may tarry all Night, yet Joy shall come in the Morning. Though God suffer them to be cast into the Fire and Water, yet he will bring them out into a Wealthy Place, as he did Job. If he try them in the Fire as Gold, it is but to Purge and Refine them, and then he will bring them forth more Glorious than before. He will give them the expected End. Though *Israel* suffered greatly in the Wilderness, yet it was but to prove them, that he might do them good in the latter End. And therefore Satan most vigorously Prosecutes his Design while his Time lasts, because he knows that his Time is but short. Psal. 30. 5. Psal. 66. 10, 11, 12. Jer. 29. 11.

Nay, though God suffer them to be tried, and for a time to be foiled by the Temptations, yet they shall not be utterly cast down by the Temptation, for the Lord upholds them with his Hand. Therefore, saith the Church, when I fall I shall arise, when I sit in Darkness the Lord shall be a Light unto me; thus we see the best and strongest Believers may have Psal. 37. 23, 24. Mic. 7. 9.

have their Faith tried, and that to the utmost, so that for a time not only Flesh, but Heart also may fail them; and that many times the strongest and most eminent Believers have met with the sharpest and strongest Temptations, and the Reasons why and whence it may be so. Let us now make some Application.

(1. *Inference.*) Though God must be the Giver and Support of the Believer's Faith, yet the Believer must Act and Exercise this Faith, if he expect to overcome by it. Faith is God's Gift, but it must be our Act; we must believe to the saving of our Souls. It is by our actual believing and taking hold of the Covenant, that we must be justified.

It is Christ that by his Merit must justify and save us, but we must come to him, and by Faith in him apply his Merit to our selves, that we may be saved. Therefore we are said to be justified, not by the Merits of it, but by its receiving and applying his Merits to us upon Gospel Terms: *To as many as received him, to them he gave Power to become the Sons of God, even to these that believe in his Name.* This Faith was not begotten in them by the Will of the Flesh, or of Man, but the Will of God. He begot it in them by his Spirit, yet they must by this Faith receive Christ; if they receive him not by Faith, though his Merit be sufficient to save the whole World, yet it will not be efficient to save them, without the Application of it

Joh. 11.
12.

Ver. 13.

it through Faith ; we are *kept by the Power of God to Salvation*, but it is through Faith. Pet. 1. 5.

(2.) Hence learn the difference between Trials and real Temptations ; as Trials they come from the Hand of God, whose Trials are sometimes called Temptations. God tempted *Abraham*, but it was only the Trial of his Faith and Obedience, that it might be made more visible to himself and others.

God is not tempted to Sin, nor doth Mar. 4. 7. he tempt Man, though Men may tempt God ; we may tempt God to suffer us to fall into Mischief, if we "presumptuously run upon our own Ruin ; nor doth he tempt any Man to Sin, or encourage him to it by any Temptation laid before him.

He doth not Constrain or Encourage him to Sin by any Temptations that is laid before him ; he may withhold his Grace, and expose him to Temptation ; Jam. 1. but that it proves a Temptation to Sin proceeds from another Cause, when he is drawn aside of his own Lust, and enticed.

God may for a Man's rejecting God's Counsel give him up to follow his own Course, and so run upon his own Ruin, and punish him for it when he hath done ; but God doth not entice him, or incline Psal. 81. his Will to Sin ; but this proceeds from a Man's own Lust. Satan may objectively tempt, and design the drawing them to Sin

Sin by it, but it is a Man's Will and Lust enticing and prevailing with him to consent and incline to embrace the Temptation, and to be drawn to Sin by it, that makes the Temptation sinful. In this consists the difference between God's being said to tempt us, to try us, but it is Satan and our sinful Lusts that make these Trials prevailing Temptations.

(3. *Infer.*) Hence learn that there is no Trust or Confidence to be put in any Inherent Grace that we have received; for all the Grace we have, or pretend to have, will not free us from, nor support us in Trials and Temptations, unless we have continual supply from the Fountain, Jesus Christ.

As the Body cannot be supported without outward and daily Supplies, so our Spiritual Man will faint without daily Supplies from Christ. The true Believer, though he have daily occasion to spend his strength in Duties that God calls for, and Temptations that he must resist, yet he shall be enabled to persevere and hold out to the end. But this proceeds not from any Grace he hath Received, and is Inherent in him, but from his Union to Christ as his Head; and because he lives, the Believer shall live also. It is by his Power that we are kept through Faith to Salvation. It is by his Grace, being made sufficient for us, and his Strength, being made perfect in our Weakness, that we are supported under all Temptations and Trials.

Joh. 14.

19.

1 Pet. 1. 5.

If

If any Grace Inherent in us were able to make us hold out to the end, it would be ^{2 Cor. 12.} Faith and Love, which are the two Principal and Cardinal Graces: Faith it is that goes forth, and takes hold of Christ, receives and believes his Word and Promises, and depends upon him for the fulfilling of them. And Love draws out the Heart after Christ, and makes the Soul willing and ready to endure all Difficulties for his sake; but yet both these would fail, as Inherent in us, if they had not daily supplies from Christ; we find that the best and strongest of Christians have fainted, and been foiled for a time under Temptation. *Abraham's* Faith in Trial was sometimes staggered, and so was *David's*; and both *Peter's* Faith and Love failed him when tried, though he was very confident of them both. Experienced Christians have found the same, and therefore their Perseverance hath been owing not to themselves, but to their Union to, and daily renewed Supplies of Grace from Christ. Therefore whatever Grace we have received, we have no reason to be High-minded, but to Fear, because we stand by Faith; and this must have its daily renewed Supplies from Christ; our too much Confidence in our own Strength and Grace may provoke God to withdraw from us, and leave us to ourselves, because hereby we rob him of his Glory, and ascribe that to our own Grace, which of Right belongs to his supporting and

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Rom. 11.
20.

Numb. II.
15.

and renewing Grace. *Moses* was so sensible of his own Weakness, and the greatness of the Burden of Government that lay upon him, that he chose rather to die outright, than to see his own Wretchedness, and the Weakness and Corruption of his own Heart.

Let no Man, how strong soever he may think himself to be, confide in or boast of his own Strength. As strong as thou have been baffled and foiled by Temptation, and thou canst be no more sure of thy standing than they, for thy strength is no more than theirs; nay, this thy Self-confidence is thy Sin, and that which tempts thee to it, is thy Lust, which hath so strong an Influence upon thee.

It is the Fruit of thy Pride and Self-conceitedness; nay, it may expose thee to further Temptation. It may make thee to neglect thy Watch, to forget the Deceitfulness of thine own Heart, which being thus lifted up, is not right in thee; and cause thee to neglect thy Dependance upon Christ for support and supply of Grace, and so weaken thy Faith in Christ.

(4. *Infer.*) Hence learn that no Believer hath reason or leisure to be Idle, Slothful or Secure in this Life. Heaven is the Time and Place of Rest; this Life is our Working Time and Place, where the Bride is dressing and preparing to meet her Bridegroom, by working out her Salvation with Fear and Trembling; and must take all care, and make all haste to get ready,

Rev. 14.
13.

Rev. 19.7.

Phil. 2.12.

Mark 13.

35, 36.

dy, lest the Bridegroom come before she be ready. Christianity being a Warfare, the best of Christians have need to be constantly upon their Watch. For,

(1.) It is Christ's Command that they should be so. *What I say to you, I say* Mark 13. *unto all, Watch, watch and be sober; we* 37. *must Watch and Pray that we enter not into* 1 Pet. 4. 7. *Temptation.* If our Foot be taken in the Snare we shall not easily get it out again. It is far more easie to Conquer a Temptation in its first Assault, than when it hath got into our Bosom, and gained upon our Heart and Affections. A Spark is more easily quench'd in the Thatch, than when it is grown into a Flame. *A* Jam. 1. *Man is tempted, when he is drawn aside* 14, 15. *of his own Lust, and enticed; for when Lust hath conceived, it brings forth Sin.* Therefore we must abstain from the appearance of Evil, i. e. whatever ye suspect 1 Thes. 5. 22. to be Sin, and whatever may be the occasion of Sin; many things at the first View may be innocent and harmless, which afterwards prove Temptations unto Sin, when yeilded unto. Therefore it is our Duty to watch against these.

Watch your Hearts, for out of them are Prov. 4. the Issues of Life and Death. And the 23. Heart is deceitful above all things, and Jer. 17. 9. desperately wicked. Psal. 39. 1.

Watch thy Mouth and Lips; the Tongue Jam. 3. 6. is an unruly Member, sets on Fire the whole Course of Nature, and is it self set on Fire of Hell.

Watch

Watch over thy Life, that that be regular according to all God's Commandments. That thou *deny all Ungodliness and Worldly Lust, and live Soberly, Righteously and Godly.* Watch the inward Lustings of thy Heart, that they run not out after earthly and sinful Vanities; for *the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit. There is the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and Pride of Life,* that we must watch against; Bodily Delights, and Sensual Pleasures, and those things which being seen with the Eye, are earnestly coveted after; and those things which gratifie our Proud Humours. Watch all your Senses, which may be Inlets of Sin and Temptation into your Hearts, your Eyes, Ears, your Palate or Taste, your Hands and Feet, that none of these may expose you to Temptation.

Watch your Understandings, Will and Affections, and all the Passions of your Souls, which may incline and expose you to Temptations. That your Understanding be not blinded, your Judgments bribed, your Wills inclined too close with Temptation. That your Affections and Passions be not Inordinate or Transported, and set upon undue Objects. That your Consciences be not dull and drowsie, and neglect their Office, but suffer your Hearts to be hardened through the Deceitfulness of Sin.

Watch your Graces, that they languish and die not; your Faith, that it degenerate

rate not into Presumption and Carnal Security, and so forget its dependance upon Christ for Support and Supply. Watch your Meekness and Patience, that it turn not into a private Spirit, and neglect of the Duties that belong to the Place and Capacity wherein God hath set you, or cause you not to have that due Respects that ye ought to have to God, his Honour and Glory, and the Good of your own and others Souls, fearing the Frowns and Chidings of Men, and giving Offence to them more than God.

Watch your Humility and Lowliness of Spirit, that it do not engender a secret Pride in your Hearts ; for it is a dangerous thing to be Proud of our Humility ; and that it be not a Voluntary Humility beyond Prescription in those things that God never enjoined ; watch your Self-denial, that it be not for By and Sinister Ends and Designs, but for Christ's sake. And the like I may say of all other Graces.

Watch your Duties, that they be such as you have Divine Warrant for, and not merely Humane Tradirions. Watch to get your Heart into a right Frame for them, that you perform them in a due and seasonable time. That ye perform them in a right Manner, in Spirit and Truth, with Reverence and Godly Fear, the Heart and Lips going together in your drawing nigh to God, who is the Searcher of the Heart, and Trier of the Reins, with

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suitable

suitable Affections, and for sincere and right Ends.

Watch the Frame and Temper of your Hearts in all your Business and Concerns in the World, that while ye have the World in your Hands, it may not insensibly steal into your Hearts, and entice them away from God, or make them forgetful of him, and your Duty to him; and cause you that you make not the Glory of God, and Obedience to his Commands, your chief End in all that ye do. That you make a good choice of familiar Friends, that watch your Society with Men in the World. That ye beware of Sin in your Society, your delight be in the Saints, that your Conference may be to Edification. As much as may be, shun bad Company, wherein ye can neither do nor receive good; and when upon necessary Occasions you must be in such Company, make no longer stay than you needs must; and watch that ye receive no Infection by them, and that ye be not Partaker of their Sin.

Psal. 16.
Eph. 4.29. Thus you must be every way and in all things Circumspect and Watchful, looking to every thing you go about deliberately and throughly, from the beginning to the end, and on every side, that it be no way faulty. In all these, and such like respects, we must be watchful that we enter not into Temptation. And that for these Reasons.

Eph. 5.15.

(1.) God hath no where promised that ye shall absolutely be freed from all, or all manner

manner of Temptations. He hath indeed promised that we shall not be tempted above what we are able. He promised to keep the Church of *Philadelphia* from the Hour of Temptation, which should come upon the Word to try them; but they had been tried, and had kept the Word of his Patience; and therefore though the skirts of that Storm that was coming upon the World might fall upon them, yet the main Storm it self should not so violently fall upon them; though not altogether, yet in great measure they should be kept from this Storm.

Nay, (2.) He hath not only promised absolute freedom, but he hath foretold us the contrary. That *through many Tribulations we must enter into the Kingdom of God*. If any Man will live Godly in Christ Jesus, he must suffer Persecution; for the World that hates him, will hate them also. Nay, he hath made it a Badge of Sonship; we must suffer with Christ, if we expect to be glorified with him. There is a Cross to bear, as well as a Crown to wear: Christ himself suffered upon the Cross; and in this the Apostle desires to fill up the measure of Christ's Sufferings, not the Sufferings which Christ was to undergo in his Person, or which he had left short and undone; for he finish'd the Work that God gave him to do; but the Sufferings which Christ had allotted to him to undergo, as a Member of Christ, and Mi-

1 Cor. 10.
13.

Rom. 3. 10.

Joh. 16.
33.

2 Tim. 3.
12.

Joh. 15.
18.

Heb. 12.
7, 8.

Luke 9.
23.

Col. 1. 14.
Joh. 17. 4.

nister of the Gospel, this he desired to do for the sake of Christ.

(3.) While in this World we walk in the midst of Snares, are we not in danger to be caught in some or other of them? *Can a Man walk upon Coals, and his Feet not be in danger to be burnt or scorched by them?* Snares compass us about, and hem us in on every side, while in this World. All Persons, indeed, are not addicted to the same kind of Sins; but we have every one our own Ways, to which we are ready to turn, and by which we are in danger to be overcome. That may be a strong Temptation to one, that may be little or none to another. Considering further,

Isa. 56. 3.

(4.) Who is the great Tempter, and what Advantages he hath for the tempting of us. Satan is the great Tempter, and he *goes about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom, and by what means, he may devour.* Tempted Souls drawn into his Net are his Prey, and he is hungry and greedy to catch them, and will not spare them if he get them into his Net; for their Destruction is his Design. And he hath many Ways and Devices to draw them into his Net; he is a wily and crafty Enemy; he is experienced aright in his Trade, therefore called the Old Serpent. He is a Spirit, and therefore can lay his Golden and Taking Baits before us, and himself not seen by us, till he have caught us in his Net. He hath all the World to make Baits of.

and

and so to suit Baits for every Man's Temper and Inclination. Look into the whole World, and ye shall find nothing in it, but what Satan in one kind or other makes use of as a Bait and Temptation unto Sin; if it be not so to one temper and sort of Men, yet it will be so to another; we read, *Job* 1. 7. of Satan's going through the World, and walking up and down in it, not as an idle Wanderer, but as a diligent Observer of all Persons and Things in the World, where, when, and to whom he may by Temptation do Mischief: for he goes about like a roaring Lion, seeking whom he may devour. *1 Pet.* 5. 8. Devouring Souls is his Design in all his Perigrinations, what the World would afford him as a Bait to tempt Souls by, what manner of Temptations they are most inclined to, and most easily overcome by; what is the fittest Season, and what to tempt them by? For there are Objects of all sorts in the World to suit every Temper and Constitution of Men, and therefore he seriously considers what Temptations are most likely to take, and when to be made use of to all Tempers and Constitutions of Men. And he hath all the World to turn him in, to find out, and craftily to apply such Baits as are most likely to take Effect. As all Fishes are not to be taken with the same Baits, nor are all Baits taking at all Times and Seasons of the Year: So all Temptations are not of the like force with all Men, nor taking with them at all Times

Faith's Trial and Triumph.

and Seasons ; but Satan knows his fittest Opportunity, and so takes it.

He must have his Liberty and Grant from God ; and this is limited ; for though he be in some Sence the Efficient Cause of Temptation, yet God sets him his Bounds, as is evident in the Case of *Job*. God was the Principal Efficient for *Job's* Trial, and the proving of Satan to be a Liar and false Accuser of *Job* ; and that the Character that God gave of *Job* was true, that there was none like him in that Generation ; but Satan out of a Design to confute God, and ruin *Job*, was the Efficient Cause of his Temptations, and made use of Instruments and Agents for the carrying on of this Design. Thus God had a Design that *Ahab* should fall at *Ramoth Gilead* ; and he makes use of Satan as an Efficient or Actor under him, to be a lying Spirit in the Mouths of all his false Prophets, and gives him a licence so to do, and assures him of Success, notwithstanding what *Micajah* said to the contrary. Thus God designed to rend Ten Tribes from *Rehoboam*, but it was Satan that perswaded him to reject the Counsel of the Old Men, and take the Advice of the Young Ones. Though Satan tempted both the People to be uneasie under *Rehoboam's* Government, and to reject him, and *Rehoboam* to prefer the Counsel of the Young Men before that of the Old. Thus it was in the Case of *Absalom*, in preferring the Counsel of *Hushai* before that of *Ahitophel* :

Ahitophel : God had a Design to destroy *Absalom*, and bring his Conspiracy to nought. And Satan had an Hand in tempting him to this as the Means. And Satan is never at a loss for Instruments and Agents to act by, since he hath the whole World to turn him in, and to make use of the most suitable and taking Baits to catch Souls by. And he being a most Subtil and Experienced Tempter, he knows when to apply these Temptations, and to whom. He knew it a seasonable time to stir up *David's* Lust, when in a dull and secure Frame, and had a beautiful Object before his Eyes, and that in a most tempting Posture, naked, and bathing her self. The Season of *Achan's* Temptation was when Wedges of Gold were before him ; and so in many other ; for he goes about to seek and take the fittest Opportunity to tempt, and when the Temptation may be the most taking.

Now Satan hath the whole World to rove in, all Persons and Things therein, and all the Works and Affairs thereof, one way or other to make use of for his tempting Baits. To Instance in some.

(1.) He makes use of the Smiles and of the Frowns of the World, of the Smiles and Flatteries of the World, to allure and tempt Men unto Sin ; he hath the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eye, and Pride of Life, and knows how to suit these to every Man's Temper. If a Man be given to the Lusts of the Flesh, to

Psal. 49.

18.

Joh. 5. 44.

Carnal and Sensual Delights and Pleasures, he hath such Objects to set before him. If he find a Man addicted to be taken with the Riches, and seeming good Things of the World, he will set forth the World in its most lively and alluring Colours. If he find a Man Ambitious of Worldly Honours, Credit and Applause from Men, he will find Flatterers enough to puff up the Bladder of his Pride and Ambition, and cause him more to value the Praise of Men than the Praise of God, and to take sinful Courses for the obtaining of it. And so he can make use of the Frowns of the World, to provoke to Discontent, to murmur against God, to vex and fret at his own Condition, and the cross Providences that he meets with, to envy the Prosperity of others, and by sinful Practices to rid himself of his present Crosses. Nay, he can stir up such Distrustful and Inordinate Fears in a Man's Spirit, that he rather chuseth to Sin, and to take any Indirect Course, rather than to fall into those Dangers and Miseries that he so greatly fears; and sometimes can see no possible way to escape them, than by such sinful Shifts; upon this account he can make use of Riches and Poverty, Prosperity and Adversity, to tempt Men by; by Prosperity he tempts Men to Pride, Forgetfulness of God and their Duty, to Scorn and Disdain, and be Uncharitable to those that are Inferiour to them.

To a conceit of his own Goodness and Favour with God, and of his own Wisdom, Care and Providence; and to Vilifie and Censure others that are Poor and in Misery. By Adversity he tempts to distrust of the Providence of God, and his Faithfulness to his Word and Promise; he tempts him to Envy and Grudge at those that are in better Circumstances than himself, and to relieve himself by unlawful Ways; hereby he tempts him to Impatience and Discontent. Therefore *Agur, Prov. 30.* desires neither Poverty nor Riches, but Food convenient for him. Thus Prosperity and Adversity are both Occasions of Temptations unto Sin. And I look upon Temptations, because of Prosperity, to be far more dangerous and hurtful than those that win by Poverty and Affliction; for these are more sweet and pleasant to the Taste, and more grateful to Corrupt and Carnal Appetites, and so go down more insensibly and delightfully, how bitter soever they be in the Belly, and how sad soever the Effects of them be. These secretly entice the tempted to Sin, and are most taking with his Carnal Lusts; whereas afflictive Temptations are more contrary to our Humane Tempers, loathed at the first sight, and at the present not joyous *Heb. 12.* but grievous. Nature it self opposeth *12.* these, and the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness are many times wrought by them, so that they got good by them at the latter end; whereas Prosperity many times ends

Psal. 73.

Psal. 77.

ends in Destruction, many more are Eternally ruined by Prosperity than by Adversity; for by the sadness of the Countenance, which is caused by Affliction, the Heart is made better.

Zech. 7. 3. Hence it is that our Saviour makes it next to an Impossibility for a Rich Man to get to Heaven. Hence the Apostle adviseth us to be content with a mean Condition, because they that will be Rich fall into many hurtful Lusts that Drown Men in Perdition. It is the Poor that follow Christ, and have the Gospel preached to them, and most readily embrace it, and are not so easily taken off by a frowning World, as the Rich are by the World's Smiles and Flatteries. However, there are Temptations on both Hands, and Satan sometimes makes use of the one, and sometimes of the other, to tempt Persons by.

(2.) Satan can make use of all Creatures in the World to be Snares and Temptations; he made use of the Serpent to tempt *Eve* by, of the pleasantness and beauty of the forbidden Fruit, and its pretended Usefulness to make one Wise; he made use of the Fruit of the Vine to make *Noah* and *Lot* Drunk; he made use of the Rich Man's plentiful Crop and Incomes to tempt him to take his Ease, to Eat, Drink, and be Merry; *Jesurun's* Plenty and Fatness caused him to forget God; he made use of Gold, and a goodly *Babylonish* Garment, to tempt *Achan* by to Covetousness and Theft. And so in many other Cases.

(3.) He

(3.) He can make use of all Men by one means or other to become Tempters, whether they be Foes or Friends. Wicked Foes delight to tempt, they are Satan's Factors and Agents, led Captive by him at his Will to do his Drudgery. A Man can get no Good in Wicked, Vain, and Idle or Wanton Company; they will some way or other be a Snare to him, either by their Counsel or Example; they will endeavour to make others as vain and wicked as themselves, for their Design is to promote and advance Satan's Kingdom. It is an hard matter to be in wicked Mens Company, and get no Infection by them, either to tempt us to Sin and Wickedness, or to make us Partakers of their Sins, and so to contract Guilt upon our Souls. Therefore good Men endeavour to shun *Psal. 26.4.* such Company as much as may be; so did *David*. It is said of *St. John*, that he leaped out of the Bath, when he saw that *Cerintbus* the Heretick was there. *Solomon* adviseth not to come near the Door of an Harlot's House. And the Apostle chargeth us not to keep Company with Fornicators, Drunkards, &c. no, not to Eat with them; we must not make them our delightful Companions. It is true, that while we are in this World we must sometimes have to do with such; but we must not chuse and delight in such Company, nor stay in it longer than we need must; and must be watchful over our selves, that

that we be not ensnared by any of their Temptations.

Nay, Satan can make use of Friends and good Men as Snares and Temptations to us, either by our too frequent Visits of them, or spending too much Time with them, which might be more profitably spent elsewhere; and about other Work, or by not improving our Time to Spiritual and Mutual Edification, but in Idle and Vain Conference and Discourse, busying our selves with other Mens Matters; or it may be in Slandering and Backbiting our Neighbours, (which is but too ordinary and common a Sin now-a days) or at least meerly about Worldly Matters that tend nothing to the mutual Edification of our Souls. Nay, if we have a Design to do another good, (as nondonbt *Job's* Friends had) yet Satan, by one Circumstance or other, may divert us from our purpose, as he did them, by the greatness of his Affliction, to censure him for a most wicked and vile Man, and an Hypocrite, which was a far greater Temptation to *Job*, and provoked him to more passionate and impatient Expressions than the loss of his Estate and Children, nay, than all his Sores wherewith he was afflicted. How dreadful was that Temptation when his own Wife blamed him for his Integrity, and advised him to Curse God and Die.

(4.) He can tempt us by all the Comforts that we enjoy in the World, our Food, Raiment, Sleep, whatever it is that
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our Souls take pleasure in, and that in themselves are Blessings to us; he can tempt us to take too much delight in them, or abuse them to excess, to make our Belly our God, and to take more pleasure in pampering that, than serving our God, and rather live to eat, than eat to live, to forget the Donor of them, and serve our Lulls and Carnal Appetites by them, and forget the Work and Duty of Mortification; so to indulge the Flesh, as to neglect the Mortification of the Flesh, and keeping it in subjection, for the better fitting it for Self-denying and Flesh-displeasing Work. He can tempt us by things in themselves lawful, to Sin, and run into Extravagancies, as by Feasting, Recreations and Pleasures, &c.

(5.) He can make use of our outward Senses to be Inlets of Temptation into the Heart, of our Eyes, Ears, Palates, Hands, Feet, &c. and our inward Senses, as Memory, in making it slippery in retaining what is Good, and retentive of what is Evil; more ready to retain any Idle and Vain thing, than Heavenly and Spiritual things. And so for our Thoughts, and Fancies, and common Sence, that should convey good things to our Understandings.

(6.) By Temptation he can abuse our very Reason and Understanding, by blinding our Minds by Sophistical Arguments; he can also hereby corrupt our Judgments, pervert and prejudice them, and our Wills
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and Affections, yea, and Conscience it self, by stifling Convictions, and turn your Minds and Thoughts to other things. He often makes Men to forget their Sins, or at least the Sence of them, and cast them behind their Backs, and so prevents our deep and serious Humiliation and Repentance of them; he steals away our Hearts and Affections from God and Godliness, and sets them upon Worldly Vanities; our Love, our Joy, our Fear, and all the Passions of the natural Soul, are often either set upon wrong Objects, or keep not within their due Bounds, but most dead and remiss where they should be most active and lively, and most violent where they should be more cool and remiss. He can tempt us by all the Faculties of our Souls, as well as the Members of our Bodies.

(7.) He can tempt us in our Duties, by distracting us in them, or causing us to neglect them, or to be Dead, Formal, Customary and Hypocritical in them, or to be proud of them, or to rest in them. In the reading or hearing the Word he can make us to be dull and drowsie, or our Minds filled with wandring and distracting Thoughts, causing us to make a light Reckoning and Account of it, not to hear it with that Reverence and Attention that we ought to do when God speaks to us. Hinders us from understanding, believing, meditating upon it, and applying it to our selves for Spiritual Benefit
and

and Advantage, and it may be, begets a prejudice in our Minds and Hearts against it, or to reject the Message for the Messenger's sake.

So as to our Meditation, which should be chiefly intent upon Spiritual Things, what distracting Thoughts doth he often infuse into our Minds, which by their Crouds thrust out more serious and profitable Meditations, or make us more Cold and Heartless in them, so that we bring them to no Maturity and Perfection, find not that sweetness in them, or benefit by them, that otherwise we might do, but through his Temptation, vain and worldly Thoughts and Meditations lodge within. Thus the Devil can tempt by himself, though he be a Spirit. There is a secret way of Spirits Communicating themselves to others, though we know not how it is done; but we know that Satan can suggest and dart into our Minds Evil things, though we know not whence or how they came.

He can tempt us in Prayer, either hindering us from due Preparation of the Heart for so Solemn a Duty; by worldly Business leaving us little and seasonable Time, and less Heart to this Duty, or causing us to be Dead, Dull, Formal and Hypocritical in this Duty, and not to exercise Grace therein as we ought, as Repentance, Faith, fervent Affections, Humility and Reverence; many times (it may be) to rest in a Road of Duty, without being duly sensible what we come about, and

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to make more use of Gifts than of Grace herein.

(8.) He can make use of our very Graces and Comforts to be Snares and Temptations to us, either to rest in them, and be proud of them, or to mistake them in our Faith, taking a presumptuous Confidence in our selves, or in the strength of it, or a tempting God to expose us, and leave us to be tempted, as he did *Peter*; our Patience and Calmness of Spirit, under Pretence hereof to neglect our Duty in the Places and Capacities that he hath set us in, or to give Provocations to provoke us to Impatience and rash Anger, we may hereby be tempted either to neglect our Duty to others, or not to do it in that due and regular manner as we ought; so in our Sorrow for, and Repentance of, our Sin, we may be tempted to a worldly Sorrow, which tends to Death, instead of a Godly Sorrow, working Repentance to Life; mistaking a Legal for an Evangelical Repentance; a seeming Repentance upon the account of the Apprehension of Punishment, and the sad Consequents of Sin, and this too often without real Hatred to Sin it self, and real Reformation of Heart and Life. Sometimes by Convictions of Conscience, and meer Restraint, keeping back from the outward Acts of Sin, while it remains firm and untouched in the Heart and Affections. Many Sinners would be most notorious Sinners, if they were as gross in their outward

outward Actions, as they are in their inward Affections and Inclinations.

(9.) He can tempt us in all our Relations and relative Capacities, whereby we either Indulge and Connive at Sin in them; or occasion them to Sin. Satan is very busie in Families, and can make use of one Member to be Instrumental in, and Occasions of Sin in others; what Feuds, Quarrels and Contentions doth he raise in Families? What Disorders? What neglect of Duty, according to the Places, Offices and Capacities that each one is placed in as Governors, and governed? Parents neglecting their Duty towards Children, not giving them due Instruction, and Educating them in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord; not duly Admonishing and Correcting them for their Faults, and watching over them, but giving them too much Liberty, and Indulging them in their Youthful Lusts and Vanities, suffering them to go on in vain and sinful Courses, till they be so hardened therein that they grow from Evil to Worse, and grow so Hardned and Incurable, that no ordinary Rebuke or Correction will take place with them.

We see how it was with *Eli's* Family in this Case, and what a sad Judgment it brought upon his Family; what Mischiefs did *David's* Inordinate Love and Overmuch Indulgence to *Absalom* and *Adonijah* bring upon his Family? Thus Husbands, through an easiness of Spirit, and too

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much Indulgence of their Wives in their wilful Humours, lose their Authority, and are often tempted by them, and hindered from the discharge of their Duties in their Families, and excited and drawn by them to the Commission of Sin, and the hurt of others in the Family. Thus the Serpent prevailed with Eve to be her Husband's Tempter to Eat of the Forbidden Fruit. Thus Solomon's Wives tempted him to Idolatry and Forgetfulness of God, that had appeared to him twice, and brought upon him the rending of Ten Parts of his Kingdom from his Son. Thus Jezebel (though Abah was wicked enough himself, and had sold himself to do wickedly) yet she stirred him up to more Wickedness. Thus Satan stirs up Wives by their proud and ungovernable Wills and Humours, and violent Passions, to throw off the Yoke of Government, and usurp Authority over their Husbands, will not obey nor hearken to Reproof, will not be kept within due Bounds, will have their own Wills and Humours, and by their Clamours, or one way or other, force their Husbands to Compliance with them in their Humours; by this means Childrens Faults are hid from Fathers, and due Correction and Restraint obstructed. Therefore Solomon saith, *A Child left to himself brings his Mother to Shame*; she by obstructing that due Discipline, which in time should have been exercised over him, she in a special manner hath Cause to repent of her Undutifulness

Prov. 29.
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ness to her Husband, and sinful Indulgence of her Child. Oh! what Passions will many Wives break forth into, and what Brawls and Contests arise in Families, when Fathers would Correct their Childrens Faults, the Wife more ready to fly in the Face of her Husband, if he attempt to Correct them, than to Reprove and Correct them themselves? Nay, they harden their Childrens Hearts against the Reproofs and Corrections of Fathers, so that Fathers are often forced to lose their Authority, and sit down in the neglect of their Duty, for Peace sake. and rather than make a Tumult in the Family. And so likewise by the Evil Examples of Governours in Families, Children and Servants are emboldned and hardened in their sinful Courses. A bad Example in the Governor of a Family, will embolden others in the Family to be worse than they. A small Fault in a Governor will embolden those that are under them to be guilty of greater. Nay, how often upon these Accounts are the Duties of Religion neglected, or unseasonably and formally performed, and Sin made a light matter of? And so by degrees the Tares of Sin grow up, and by degrees choak and root out Religion out of professing Families, yea, and the decay of Religion in the very Heart and Affections, and cooling it, and quenching it in the Lives and Practices of those that have made a warm Profession thereof. Nay, yet further, Parents and

Job 21.
29.

Governors Sins may bring a Curse upon Posterity : God may punish their Sins, by leaving their Posterity to greater Sins, to the bringing of God's Curse upon the whole Family. God layeth up the Iniquity of Parents for their Children, and they shall know it. They may with Sorrow and Shame of Heart read the Punishment of their own Sins in the Sin of their Children. This is so large a Subject, that it is hard to keep within Bounds, and yet so common a Case, and so many ways the Devil hath to lay Snares, and raise even fatal Temptations in Families, that I have the more largely insisted upon it. But yet by these hints you may much enlarge upon this Head in your own Meditations, and be quickned to a more diligent and constant Watchfulness against these, and such like Snares and Baits that Satan may lay for you in your Families, even to the Ruin both of your Families and of your own Souls.

(10.) Satan can make use both of the Commands and Providences of God as Snares to tempt unto Sin, from the restraint that God laid upon *Adam* from eating of the forbidden Fruit. Satan raiseth an Argument to tempt them to have hard Thoughts of God for restraining them from eating of that which was the most pleasant and desirable Fruit in the Garden, was pleasant to the Eye and Taste, and most desirable to make them wise ; and hereby he provokes both to Envy against God,

God, and irritates Lust to covet it, and so to rebel against God, and break their Covenant of Life with him; and the Horridness of his Temptation is most dreadfully manifested in the dreadful Effects that it hath had upon all Humane Race ever since. How great a Temptation, and how difficult to be overcome, was the Consideration of the Wicked's Prosperity, and the Affliction of the Godly to the Psalmist, *Psal.* 73. And as a warning against this the Thirty-seventh *Psal*m was written; this was the Argument whereby *Job's* Friends would prove him a most Vile, Wicked and Hypocritical Person, because of the Severity of God's Hand upon him. And by this means Satan takes Advantage to tempt Men, either to slight the Observation of God's Providences, and Improvement of them for Good and Benefit to themselves, or else to the Misconstruing of them in one respect or other. Oh what bad Constructions doth the Devil tempt Men to make of God's Providential Actings in the World! And often draws them to great Sins thereby, to judge of God's Love or Hatred by the visible Providences that he exerciseth towards the Sons of Men, contrary to what the Wise Man had gathered from his own Experience, that no Man could know Love or Hatred by any thing that was before him under the Sun; for as to these visible Providences, all things come alike to all; for Infinitely Wise Ends

Gen. 3. 45.

Eccles. 9.
1.

God exerciseth an Arbitrary Power in these Cases.

(11.) Satan being a Spirit, can secretly suggest and inject Temptations and Darts of Hell into our Minds and Thoughts, and thereby tempt us unto Sin ; which way, or how Spirits do Communicate their Minds to each other, we are much in the dark ; but that they do thus come to confer one with another in a secret and unseen way, is evident. How many Thoughts are darted into our Minds, that we can give no good account whence they come, or how they came there ? It is true that we have working Fancies, and even when our Bodies are at rest, and our Senses locked up ; yet Fancy and Thoughts of one kind and other are at Work, and it may be such Thoughts as never came into our Minds when we were awake. Sometimes vain and sinful Thoughts are darted into our Minds, and we may reasonably conceive they came from the Devil, having gained the consent of the Will, nor are the natural Products of our Lusts and Appetites ; and yet we know not which way they came into our Minds ; but we may reasonably suppose they came from the suggestion of Satan ; and these may work upon our Lust, and entice it, and so gain upon our Wills and Affections, and so become our Sins, which they were not till they had gained some Consent of Will and Lust. These Sparks of Sin become our Sins, when they take any Impression upon

upon the Tinder of our Lusts, and blow them into an actual Flame; when they have gained upon our Lusts or natural Appetites, then they become Temptations. As the Apostle teacheth us, *Jam. 1. 14. Every Man is tempted when he is drawn away by his own Lust, and enticed.* That there are such Suggestions darted into our Souls, Experience sheweth; but how, or which way, or by what means they are injected, is often unaccountable. Some way or other the Devil sometimes puts us upon Soul Temptations: Satan was a Lying Spirit in the Mouths of *Ahab's* false Prophets; (he tells God he would be so) but this could be no other way than by some secret Suggestion. So *Job's* Friends were doubtless good Men, and in their coming to Visit him had a Design to Comfort and Condole him; but yet Satan makes use of them as Instruments, to aggravate *Job's* Afflictions. So that by these we see, that by one means or other Satan hath some secret way of Conveyance of his Temptations into the Minds of Men, and sometimes without, and contrary to this their Intentions.

So that Satan hath some secret unseen way of Correspondence immediately with the Minds of Men, without the use of worldly and visible Things to tempt them by; and these we have need to Watch and Pray against, lest we be led into, and overcome by Temptation.

- (5.) To conclude this. If Man had no other Tempter in the World but himself, this would be sufficient to lead him into Temptation, if not duly watched against. There is that Corruption and Depravity in Humane Nature that would tempt him unto Sin; he hath a Body of Sin and Death within him, he hath an Enmity in his Heart and Nature against God and Godliness; the natural Spirit that is in us lusteth to Envy, and by the Opposition that it meets with from the Holy and Righteous Law of God, it is irritated, and Lust blown up into Flame: Persons in a natural and unregenerate State are wholly Carnally minded, are altogether Corrupt, all the Thoughts and Imaginations of their Hearts are Evil, only Evil, and that continually. And even in the regenerate there is the Flesh that lusteth and warreth against the Spirit: So that a Man cannot do what he would, but often what he would not. Now this Contrariety and Lusting of the Flesh against the Spirit will put a Man upon continual Temptation to Sin, if not strictly and constantly watched and prayed against; this Lust will entice and draw away the Heart to Sin, and consequently to Death, so that we have no time or leisure to be idle and secure, but to be constantly upon our Watch; upon these accounts Christ bids us *Watch and Pray, that we enter not into Temptation*; to watch, because we know not what Hour our Lord will
- Rom. 7.
24.
Jam. 8. 7.
Jam. 4. 5.
Gal. 5. 17.
Mar. 26.
41.

will come, lest he find us idle, or worse employed.

Now if we consider either the shortness of our Time, the multiplicity and variety of our Temptations, the malice and subtilty of our grand Enemy the Tempter, or the necessity of our overcoming all Temptation, and obtaining Victory at last, which must Crown all our Contests, and Administer Cause of Triumph, (I say) these things considered, we had need to be continually Watchful, Sober and Circumspect. And further, considering the Triumph of the Saints over particular Trials that they meet with, or upon full and final Victory which the Saints get at last, it may quicken and encourage us to the greatest Watchfulness and Circumspection.

Which brings me to the Second Part of the Doctrine, *viz.* The Saints Triumph upon Victory, obtained through Faith, which ariseth from the Words in the Text; when *Thomas* his Faith had got his Doubts removed, and he fully satisfied that this was the Christ which had been Crucified, in an Extasie of Faith and Joy he Triumphantly cries out, *My Lord, and my God.* This is the Victory which Believers obtain through Faith; and the greater the Trials and Difficulties have been, the greater will their Triumph be.

And here let me premise, That this Triumph and Rejoicing is not a proud boasting of our selves, or what we have done

done by any Strength or Grace of our own, but we shall Glory in the Lord, in the Strength and Grace of Christ. It is in the Grace of Christ, which is Originally in him, and by the Assistance and Influence of his Spirit conveyed to, and wrought, and continually strengthened and supported in us, we Rejoice and Triumph in our Faith; not as it is ours, but as it is the Grace of Christ begotten and kept alive, supported and made strong and active by the Spirit of God, by the Word and Promises confirming and supporting our Faith, that it fail us not in the time of our need.

- 1 Cor. 1. 31. He that glorieth must glory in the Lord, for it is he that must Work in us, both Phil. 2. 12, to Will and to Do, and so enable us to 13. Work out our Salvation with Fear and 2 Cor. 10. Trembling. It is not he that commendeth himself, but he that God commendeth, that is, approved. Therefore when the Apostle tells us how great things he had done, and how abundantly he had laboured, yet confesseth that it 17, 18. was not he, but the Grace of God that 1 Cor. 15. 9, 10. was in him; we read of the Wicked glorying in themselves, and in their Wrath and Prosperity, and Triumphing over the Godly that are in Misery, inasmuch as that this stumbles the Godly themselves, as it did the Psalmist. Thus when the Witnesses were Slain, Rev. 11. 7, &c. Psal. 73. we see what Triumph the Wicked made See Micah 7. 9. over them. Whatever wicked Men glory in, they

they ascribe it to their own Wisdom, *Hab. 1. 13,* Power or Strength, and rob God of his *Ec.* Glory. Thus did *Nebuchadnezzar*; and *Isa. 10. 13,* indeed sometimes the People of God themselves are but too apt to be guilty of this Fault. This was the reason why *Judg. 7. 2,* *Gideon* must deliver *Israel* only with Three *Ec.* Hundred Men, that God, and not they, might have the Glory. And sometimes the People of God are but too Carnal and Vain in their Triumph and Rejoicing; outwardly rejoice because of their Success, and are proud of it, but do not rejoice in the Lord, in that Humble, Serious and Thankful manner that they ought. They do not wholly deny God his Glory, but yet they would have some share with him in it. And therefore their Hearts are too vainly lifted up in it. This was *Hezekiah's* Fault, for which God corrected him, *2 Chron. 32. 24, 25.* This is not the true Triumph of Faith, when it hath got the Victory over Trials and Temptations. For

The true Triumph of Faith is a thankful Rejoicing in the Lord, and his wonderful Grace and Goodness to his Soul, in supporting Faith in the Conflict, and giving Victory over the Temptation, and all the Difficulties thereof; we shall see some Instances for the Confirmation and Illustration of this, if we consult *Psal. 121. Psal. 124. Psal. 125. Psal. 73. 26, 27.* You see there wherein the Triumphs of the Church did consist. This Triumph
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is not a Carnal, but a Spiritual Rejoicing ; not in our selves, nor any thing we have done, but rejoicing in the Lord in what he hath done for us, in us, and by us, by strengthening and upholding our Faith, Patience and Perseverance, and other Graces, whereby he hath helped us to overcome the Temptations that we have been exercised by : Faith is but the Hand whereby we lay hold upon Christ, and in his Strength and Grace Encounter all Temptations ; it is not the Strength of our Faith, as it is an Inherent Grace in us ; nor the Merit of our Faith, though by it we have obtained the Victory through Faith, that we are to Glory in or Boast of, but the Grace of Christ who hath wrought Faith by the Word in us, and by

Eph. 2. 8. it hath supported us under Trials, and
 1 Pet. 1. 3, kept us from fainting in the Trial ; for
 4. Faith, not only as to its first Principle, but
 in all its subsequent Actings, is the Gift
 of God. Therefore is was through Christ's
 Luke 22. Intercession that the Apostle's Faith, though
 31, 32. foiled, yet was not overthrown.

But to come to the Point it self ; Faith's Triumph, when it hath obtained the Victory, and the more Faith hath been tried and shaken in the Contest, the greater will the Triumph be when Victory is obtained.

This will more clearly appear if you will consider these following Particulars.

(1.) Consider the greatness of the Trials themselves which the Believer hath been

been exercised under. They have not fought against small, but great Temptations and Enemies. The Temptations have been great in themselves, and Faith hath been forced to Summon in all its Strength to withstand them. The danger they have been in hath been very great, and therefore they will greatly Triumph and Rejoice when they have obtained the Victory. See how the Apostle blesteth God upon this account, 2 *Cor.* 1. 3, 4, 5. And the Cause of this rejoicing we have, *Ver.* 12. *The Testimony of their Conscience, that in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, &c. they had their Conversation, &c.* The Victory they had obtained was the Cause of their rejoicing. The Trials had been great and dangerous, and therefore their Victory was more Triumphant. Now the Trials of God's People are not only outward, but often inward, penetrate the Heart more than the Trials of others do. As to outward Trials they are often very great in themselves, and in their several Aggravations. As, (1.) As to the greatness and nearness of the things wherein God tries their Faith and Obedience. Thus God tried *Abraham's* Faith, in causing him to wander from his own Country to a strange Country, where he was only a Pilgrim and Sojourner. But especially when God calls him to offer up his only well-beloved Son of Promise, *Isaac*, when by reason of his and *Sarah's* Age he had no reasonable prospect of having any more Children.

Gen. 22.
16, 17.

Children. This was a pinching Trial; and well might *Abram* greatly Triumph when God had, beyond Expectation, delivered him from the Temptation. This was a Temptation that tried to the Quick, as God acknowledged, *Because thou hast not withholden thy Son, thine only Son, that in blessing I will bless thee, &c.* Thus God tried *Job*, in sweeping away all his Substance, and all his Children, in one Day, and then afterwards so grievously afflicting him with Sores. Here Faith was put to a pinch, and called forth to Exercise it self to the highest degree. And well might *Job* Triumph when the End of the Lord was seen in it.

Job 1.

(2.) The suddenness and unexpectedness of the Trial, makes it exceeding great. When *Job's* Afflictions come one so close upon the Heel of another, that they allowed him not a breathing time between one and another; then for *Job* to fall down, and worship, and bless God, this argued a wonderful strength of Faith and Submission to the Will and Pleasure of God; when God tries us in our choicest outward Comforts, and snatcheth them suddenly and unexpectedly from us, it is a very smart Trial. And if now Victory be obtained, and the Heart in any measure supported by Faith, it will cause great Triumph and Rejoicing.

(3.) When the Believer expects quite contrary things, and Expectation seems to be grounded upon the Word and Promise, then

then to meet with Disappointment is a great Trial; when God sends *Moses* to bring *Israel* out of *Egypt*, and the Peoples Hearts were filled with Expectation of it; now to find *Pharoah's* Heart hardened, and *Israel's* Tasks doubled, was a great startling both to *Moses* and the Peoples Faith. Saith *Moses*, *Thou hast not delivered thy People at all*, and the People murmur against *Moses* for attempting of it; so when *Christ's* Disciples expected a glorious Temporal Reign with him upon the Earth, and instead hereof he was Judged, Condemned, Crucified and Buried, it was hard upon their Faith to believe his Resurrection; but when he had convinced them of the certainty of his Resurrection, by appearing to them, well might they all, as well as *Thomas*, in Triumph cry out, *My Lord, and my God.* Exod. 5. 22, 23.

(4.) The Multiplicity of Accumulated Afflictions may be a sharp Trial of Faith, when *Deep calleth unto Deep, at the noise of God's Water Spouts; all his Billows and Waves* run over them; this is a great Trial of Faith; of this the Prophet complains, *We looked for Peace, but no Good came; for a time of Healing, and behold Trouble.* If now Salvation should come, it would be matter of great Triumph; especially if Afflictions and Trials have continued long, and Faith and Patience is almost worn out with long waiting: Nay, God seems not only to delay, but to deny their Prayers; yea, seems Psal. 42. Jer. 8. 15. Psal. 77.

Psal. 80.

as though he were angry with their Prayers ; this tries Faith to the purpose. The Psalmist was under sad Doubts upon this Account ; but having got Victory over the Temptation, he Triumpheth and Rejoiceth ; of this the Prophet sadly complains, and promiseth Triumph and Rejoicing, if God would hear and deliver them.

Mat. 15.
23.

This was a great Trial, and proved the Strength of the poor Woman's Faith, when she met with so many Repulses, both from the Disciples and from Christ himself ; when by Faith she was enabled to retort those seeming Repulses, and make use of them as Arguments to plead with Christ himself for the granting of her Request ; this makes Christ to admire her Faith, and to say, *O Woman, great is thy Faith ; be it to thee even as thou wilt.* And no doubt she went away with a joyful and triumphing Heart.

Job 1.

(5.) When Persons have walked in their Uprightness before God, been watchful against all Sin, have been Eminent in their Places, both with respect to God and Man, as God gives this Character of *Job* ; and hereupon expect that as they have been Circumspect in every Relation and Capacity, and done great things for God in their Generation, so God should prosper them, and do great things for them, in a special manner owning of them, and blessing them ; if now God Afflict them, and that above the ordinary rate of Men, this is a great Trial of their Faith. *Job*
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upon this account expected to Die quietly in his Nest, but on the contrary he met with most grievous Sufferings ; this might well stagger his Faith, but would be matter of Triumph when his Sufferings were over. Job 29.

(2.) As to inward Trials, true Believers have been so sorely exercised, that Faith hath had much ado to bear up Head under them ; and these are Troubles and Temptations which wicked Men know little or nothing of. The Godly are more thoughtful, and look further in their Sufferings than Wicked Men do : They look not only at the outward Affliction, or Secondary Cause from whence they proceed, but to the Principal Author of them, and why and wherefore it is that God thus afflicts them : They examine themselves to find out their Sin and Guilt for which God Frowns upon them, and what End God hath in afflicting of them. They say to God, *That which I see not, teach thou me, that wherein I have done amiss, I may do no more* ; and therefore the inward Thoughts of their Hearts trouble them more than the outward Troubles themselves. Thus David searching into his Heart, found that Sin was the Cause of his Complaint of his broken Bones ; but Wicked Men looking only at the outward Affliction, not at their inward Guilt, or the Frowns of God's Face. There is sometimes such an inward Sting of Conscience, either flowing from a Sence of Guilt, or from Satan's Suggestions

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Psal. 38.

ons and false Accusations, (as in *Job's* Case) that makes the Wound of Affliction more intolerably great. Hence *David* could worse bear the Afflictions that beset him after his Fall, than those that beset him in the former part of his Life. And the Accusations of *Job's* Friends oppressed more than all his Personal Afflictions. Now through Faith being in any measure able to get Victory over these, is great Matter and Cause of Rejoicing and Triumph. See in this Case how it was with *David*, both in the Trial and Triumph of his Faith, *Psal.* 57. *Psal.* 32. Sometimes the hidings of God's Face, and withdrawing of the Light of his Countenance, and Comforts of his Spirit from them, is more heavy upon them than any outward Afflictions.

For this they prize above all outward Enjoyments, as it was with the Psalmist, *Psal.* 4. 6, 7. *Lord, lift up the Light of thy Countenance upon me*; this shall put Joy and Gladness into my Heart, more than they when their Corn and Wine encreaseth. The Wicked, so they may enjoy the World, they matter not the Light of God's Countenance; that which they enquire after is, *Who will shew us any Temporal or Sensible Good*; but so is it not with the Godly. *Psal.* 57. *Thou didst hide thy Face, and I was troubled.* *Isa.* 50. 10. Hence *David* prays that God would lift up the Light of his Countenance, and restore to him the Comforts of his Spirit. It is the Duty of a Child of God walking in Darkness, and sees no Light, to trust in the

the Name of the Lord, and rely upon his God ; but it is an hard Work to bring Faith to this ; so many Doubts and Troubles will hereupon arise to the weakening of Faith, as looking upon God as an Enemy, and upon himself as a Cast-away, or his Case hopeless, and helpless, and the like ; now Wicked Men never look thus far. All their Thought and Care is how to get rid of their Affliction, not how to regain God's Favour. Sometimes Believers are put to the Trial by an hard, impenitent and unbelieving Heart, cannot get that brokenness and tenderness of Heart and Conscience that they desire. They see, and sometimes confess their Sins, but not with that brokenness and tenderness of Heart ; they cannot find those Tokens and Signs of true Repentance that they desire and long for ; and by this their Faith in the Pardoning Grace of God, and All-sufficient Merit of Christ, is much weakened, and they look upon themselves in a worse Condition than they really are ; for a Sence of Hardness is in some sort a Brokenness of Heart, and argues a Godly Sorrow for, and Hatred to Sin, and Love to God, and Conformity to his Will and Law, which wicked Men are not sensible of, nor affected with ; but here the Godly find it very difficult to take hold of a Promise, or apply it to themselves. But when the Spirit of God comes in, and by the Word through Faith applies the Comfort of the Promise to the Soul, how is the Soul filled

with Joy and Triumph? If God say in this Case, I am thine; my Grace is sufficient for thee; I will abundantly pardon; for my Thoughts are not as your Thoughts, &c. How abundantly will this fill the Soul with Joy and Triumph? The lower and nearer to Despair upon this account, the more will the Soul overflow with Joy and Comforts, when God comes in to speak Peace to such a Soul. The Word it is that brings in Comfort, but the Wicked cast the Word behind their Backs, and Build themselves up with a groundless Hope of their own Forging.

- Sometimes Believers are sore put to it by Conflicts between Flesh and Spirit; the
- Gal. 5. 17. Flesh lusting against the Spirit, so that the Believer cannot do what he would; and many a Tug hath Faith before the Spirit can get the Victory. This the Apostle
- Rom. 7. himself complains of, a Law in his Members, warring against the Law in his Mind; so that though there be a Will to do every Duty better, yet there wants a Power, which makes him cry out, *O wretched Man that I am, who shall deliver me from the Body of this Death.* This the wicked know nothing of. Sometimes they may have Conflicts between Flesh and Flesh, one Lust quarrelling with another, or between Will and enlightened Conscience, but not between Flesh and Spirit. Now when the Believer through Faith gets Victory in this
- 1 Cor. 15. Conflict, and can with Comfort rejoice
56, 57. in Christ, can say, *Thanks be to God who gives*

gives us Victory in and through Christ. I thank God through Jesus Christ. So then with the Mind I serve the Law of God; though with the Flesh, the Law of Sin. Rom. 7. 25.

Thus the Believer Triumphs in Victory over Temptations upon the account of the greatness of them, both outward and inward danger that the Soul hath been in thereby.

(2.) Another Consideration that Exalts the Believer's Triumph when he hath obtained Victory over his Temptations, is the Difficulty and Doubtfulness of the Contest.

The Temptation it self hath been very great, the Assailants on both sides very resolute, and in good earnest, the Flesh endeavouring with all its Might to carry it for the Temptation, and strengthening Temptation with all the forcible Arguments that Satan, the World, and a Lustful Heart can muster up, and assault the Soul by; on the other Hand, sanctified Nature calls in all the assistance that it can to oppose and withstand the Temptation, calls in and summons all the Graces of God's Spirit to assist in this Warfare, as the Knowledge of God's Will and Law, and his own Duty, his Covenant Engagements to Christ, the Hazard of its Soul if overcome, but especially his Faith in Christ, and Dependance upon him for Help and Supply, and to Shield him from Satan's Fiery Darts; and this makes use of

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the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, the Precepts, to let him know his Duty, and whose Word and Law it is that enjoins his Obedience; discovers to him the difference between Duty and Temptation; what is to be chosen, and what to be refused; the Promises of the Gospel for the Encouragement and Strengthening of his Faith; the Threatnings of the Word, by which he sees the dreadful Danger that his Soul is in of utter Destruction, if overcome by Temptation. These things considered, put him upon the Examination of himself to consider, whether he be able to withstand the Strength of the Temptation. Faith also lets him see where his Strength lyes; not in himself, nor in his Grace already received; for he finds Corruption exceeding strong, and Grace, when it comes to the Trial, very weak, which fills his Heart with Fear which way the Victory will go; but his strength lyes in Christ, and the Supports and Supplies of his Grace; and this puts him upon earnest and fervent Prayer, and wrestling with Christ by his Word and Promises, and what he hath done for others in the like Case, relying wholly upon Christ's All-sufficiency and Faithfulness, and the Interest and Concernedness of Christ himself in the Cause and Quarrel. Now all these Considerations, especially the Strength and Strugglings of Lust and Corrupt Nature, and the Weakness of Grace; and how many Fiery Darts and Doubts are cast

cast into the weakening of Faith? This (I say) puts the Soul in great Fear, and makes it doubtful which way the Ballance will turn; and upon this the Soul is very apprehensive of the Danger that it is in, and fearful of losing the Day; for Grace finds many Obstructions and Difficulties in the way to discourage and weaken its Hands, and Corruption finds many Encouragements and Advantages to strengthen it; so that the Soul cries out with *David*, *Many are they that rise up against me*; and if Supply come not from Heaven, I am utterly undone.

Now when the Soul having got the Victory through Faith, and that Christ hath been the Captain of his Salvation, and hath come in with full and seasonable Supply, and that his Grace hath been sufficient for him; that he hath been a present help in time of need, hath had regard to his Prayers in his Distress, and hath answered him, and strengthened him with Strength in his Soul, and given him the Victory which he hath been Contending for, and which made him Tremble for Fear of missing of; how will this Soul Triumph and Rejoice in God his Saviour, who hath not failed him, but been the Strength of his Heart, when both Flesh and Heart failed him? How will the Soul in Triumph cry out? *I was in woful Misery, Pſal. 73. exceeding Weak, and ready to yield my self Captive to the Temptation, though utterly against my Will; but Christ came in with*

Faith's Trial and Triumph.

Aid and Supply of Grace, succoured and delivered me, and vanquished and scattered all mine Enemies, hath plucked my Feet out of the Snare, out of the Mire and Clay, where there was no standing, and hath set my Feet upon a Rock, and established my Goings; therefore I will greatly Rejoice and Triumph in the God of my Salvation; yea, I will Exalt and Praise him for ever, and will call upon him, and trust in him, while I have any Being. Lord, what is Man that thou should be thus mindful of him? Or the Son of Man, that thou shouldst thus visit him? Who am I that thou shouldst take notice of such a vile, weak and worthless Creature as I am, and be such a present help to me in a time of Extremity, and to deliver me out of the Hand of my strong Enemy, which was too strong for me? For if the Lord had not helped me, my Soul had dwelt in silence, I had fainted in my Trial; and mine Enemies had swallowed me up quick, had not the Lord been on my side; but his Wonderful, Condescending and Free Grace he hath delivered me; what therefore shall I render to the Lord for all his Benefits? I will take the Cup of Salvation, and give Thanks; I will pay the Vows which I made in the Day of my Distress, and give him the Glory, Thanks and Praise due to his Name, and his only; yea, I will tell of all his wondrous Works that he hath done for me, and talk of his Doings, that others may rejoice with me, and be Comforted and Encouraged by the Comforts where-
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Psal. 116.

with I have been comforted of God ; for great and marvellous Deliverances worketh he for his Saints that trust in him. Christ will be the Object of their Joy, and this will be the Matter of their Triumph. And the deeper the Pit of Temptation hath been, wherein he stuck fast, the more highly will be the Soul in Triumph when delivered out of it. The great Contest that is between Hope and Fear in the Conflict, will even amaze the Soul, and put it into an Extasie of Joy, when delivered from its great Fears. How much more at Christ's coming in Glory, when the Soul shall be delivered from all its Fears, and out of the reach of all Temptations and Dangers, and cloathed with such weight of Glory, as Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, 1 Cor. 2. 9. nor hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive ? 2 Thes. 1. 10. How will Christ then be admired of all his Saints ? To be delivered from the lowest Pit of Hell, and advanced to the highest Pitch of Glory, to live and reign with Christ for ever, to be made Kings and Priests to God ; being thus redeemed with the precious Blood of the Son of God, and that of meer Grace and Love ; what a Rapture of Joy and Triumph will the Soul be in, when it finds it self in the Arms of Christ, and never to be parted from him any more ? For neither height, nor depth, nor Angels, &c. shall be able to separate such from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom. 8. 39.

(3.) The incredibility or unlikeliness of those things which Faith is called to believe, and to depend meerly upon the Word and Promise of God for the Accomplishment of it, may be contrary to all Humane Sense and Reason; as this will be a Cause of the staggering and fainting of Faith, while in the Contest, so it will exalt the Soul in Triumph, when Victory is obtained. The Faith of strong Believers hath sometimes been nonplussed in such Cases as these. As when God promised to give *Abraham* a Son by *Sarah* in their Old Age; this being improbable in the Course of Nature, *Sarah* laughed, but her Faith would not reach to believe it; and *Abraham* self seems to stumble at it, when he said, *Let Ishmael live in thy sight*; though upon recollecting himself, and considering whose Promise it was, the Apostle saith, *He staggered not at the Promise through Unbelief.* It was but a sudden surprize, out of which *Abraham* was quickly recovered; but when the Promise was made good, then Faith Triumphed, and for Joy called the Son's Name *Isaac*, which signifies Laughter. So when God told *Moses* that he would feed *Israel* for a Month together with Flesh in the Wilderness, *Moses* could not tell how to believe it, it was so improbable; but the fulfilling of it gave Matter of Joy and Triumph, and was a great Proof of God's Omnipotency and Faithfulness to his Word. Thus *David*, though God had promised him

Numb. 11.
18, &c.
Psalm 116.
11.

him the Kingdom, yet being in great Distress through *Saul's* implacable Enmity, his Faith fainted, and he said that he should one Day perish by the Hand of *Saul*; yea, in his haste he said, *That all Men were Liars*, as some interpret the Text; so in *Samuel*, who had anointed him King, though others (and probably with more reason) look upon it as an Act of *David's* Faith; that though all Men looked upon his Case as desperate, yet God having promised it, he believed, let the World say what they would; but after God had delivered him we see how he Triumphed and Rejoiced, and *Psal. 18.* was Penned upon that Occasion. Thus when the Sentence of Death was passed upon *Hezekiah*, and God upon Prayer reversed this Sentence, yet *Hezekiah* could not believe it without a miraculous Sign; but having obtained the Mercy, he Pens a Song of Praise. Thus it was with *Zacharias*, the Husband of *Elizabeth*, when God promised him a Son, he could not believe it, for which he was stricken Dumb; yet when *John* was Born he was filled with the Holy Ghost, and Triumphed. And so here in the Case of the Text, the Apostle could not believe the Resurrection of Christ; but when their Doubts were removed by his Appearance to them, then in Triumph *Thomas* cries out, *My Lord, and my God.* Many more Instances might be added, but these are sufficient to clear this Point. The unlikeliness of the Matter of Faith, may put

put it to a stand for a time; but when Victory is obtained, the Triumph is the greater, and God's Wisdom, Power and Faithfulness, the more admired.

Heb. 12.
II. (4.) Another Cause and Ground of Rejoicing and Triumph when Faith hath got the Victory, is the glorious and comfortable Effects that follow upon this Victory. Though Temptation be not Joyous, but Grievous, while it continues, yet afterwards it works the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness in them that are exercised thereby; for the Trial of Faith is much more precious than that of Gold: Gold is more refined, and shines more bright, but afterwards the Lustre of it perisheth, and the Gold it self will perish at last; but so it is not with Faith, it is refined and strengthened, and it endures more strong and stedfast, and the Effects of it continue for ever. Now the Effects are very Joyous in respect of God, of the Believer himself, and others.

(1.) In respect of God; the Victory of Faith tends much to the Glory of God; and in this the Believer Glories, that God is glorified in the Riches of his Grace, in thereby giving to his poor Creatures such Grace and Assistance from Heaven, as enables them to stand in most Fiery and Sharp Conflicts; fulfilling what is spoken of weak Believers, that they shall be enabled to stand; for God is able to make them to stand; how weak soever they be,
he

he is able to keep them through Faith to Salvation.

(2.) They Triumph and Rejoice in this Victory, in respect of themselves and the Grace of God bestowed upon them. This Victory of Faith administers Joy and Triumph to the Believer himself in several respects.

(1.) In respect of the new Nature that God hath given him, and the free Grace bestowed upon him. The Flesh would have yielded to the Temptation forthwith, without Resistance or Opposition; for to be Carnally minded is Death, and Enmity against God; but Godly Grace hath given a new Nature, created in Christ Jesus to good Works, a Nature that lusteth against the Flesh, and rejects the Motions and Temptations thereof. Now when the Soul by the faithful Contest and Victory finds that God hath given this new Nature to him, and enabled him thereby to overcome, how will he rejoice in the Grace of God, that hath quickned him, and made him alive in Christ Jesus, who was by Nature dead in Trespases and Sin? The change of our Natures is Matter of Rejoicing to true Believers, especially when Faith upon its Trial proves right and successful.

(2.) He now rejoiceth in his choice of Christ for his Portion; when Christ hath thus helped and delivered him, he can say,
*The Lines are fallen to me in pleasant Places;
I have a goodly Heritage, for the Lord is*

† my

my Portion. When Persons are under Temptations, they may doubt whether they have made a good choice in chusing Christ and his Ways for their Portion. Thus the Psalmist was ready to doubt, when he seeing the Prosperity of the Wicked, and the great and constant Affliction of the Godly, he was ready to say, *I have cleansed my Heart in Vain, and washed my Hands in Innocency.*

But through Faith, seeing through and overcoming the Temptations, he could say,
 Psal. 73. *Nevertheless, I am continually with thee, thou holdest me by my Hand, thou shalt guide me by thy Counsel, and afterwards bring me to Glory: Whom have I in Heaven but thee, and upon Earth there is none that I desire beside thee; my Flesh and Heart faileth me, but thou art the Strength of mine Heart and*

Psal. 119. *Portion for ever.* I have chosen thy Word
 Psal. 118. *for my Counsellor, and thy Word hath quickened me. I have hereby kept myself from mine Iniquity, and have not wilfully or wickedly departed from my God. This is the happiest choice that ever I made in the World; by this I have been kept from the Paths of the Destroyer; had I made choice of the World, Lust, &c. what a miserable, undone Creature had I been; but I have chosen him for my Friend and Beloved, who is altogether lovely, therefore will I rejoice in my choice.*

(3.) By Faith in Christ he is delivered from his distrustful Fears, which before
 ¶ did

did oppress and trouble him sore. Now he sees that it is not in vain to trust in Christ; nay, it is better to trust in Christ than in Mortal Man; nay, rather than in Princes, for they Die, and then the Thoughts of their Heart perisheth. Men of low degree are Vanity, and Men of high degree a Lie; they are altogether lighter than Vanity; but to the Lord alone belongeth Power and Strength, but my God is the God of Salvation, and to him belongs the Issues of Death. This is a abundant Cause and Matter of Triumph, especially when he hath actually delivered him from the things that he greatly feared, and by Faith given him the Victory over his Fears.

Psal. 146.

Psal. 62.

(4.) He now rejoiceth, in that through Faith in Christ he hath now obtained the thing which he so greatly desired. There is nothing in the World that the Believer desires more than Victory over Sin and Temptation, and having Conquered this, he hath overcome his greatest Enemy, and obtained that which he most earnestly desired; and this is Matter of Triumph.

(5.) By the Trial and Exercise of Faith, Faith it self is strengthened. When Proof and Experience is added to the Promise, it much confirms and strengthens Faith. Experience worketh Hope that makes not ashamed, when the Believer can say, He that hath delivered doth deliver, therefore I hope that he will yet further deliver, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting Strength. He hath Horns in his Hand, and there is

is the hiding of his Power. There was never so much of God's Power in any of the Wonders that he hath done, but there is infinitely more Power in his Hand than ever was, or can be seen, and in this Infinite Power Faith will Triumph; therefore they dare trust in Christ more steadfastly for time to come, and follow him more courageously in all Encounters; now the Believer is more steadfast in his Purposes whatever it cost him.

(6.) By this Victory through Faith, they have Peace with God and their own Consciences, which they could not have had, had they been overcome by the Temptation; they could not have looked God in the Face with any Comfort or Confidence, but God and their own Consciences would have accused and condemned them; but now they can have Confidence towards God, and lift up their Faces with Comfort and Rejoicing.

1 Joh. 3.

(3.) As this Victory is Beneficial to the Believer himself, so likewise to others for their Comfort, and Strengthening their Faith under Trials; now these can Comfort others with the same Comforts wherewith they themselves have been comforted of God, can Communicate their own Experiences to others, which may strengthen the feeble Knees.

In a Word, the Believer Triumphs now in hopes of the glorious Recompence of Reward which is set before them. Now they can say with *Paul*, I have

have fought the good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith; therefore henceforth is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Righteous God shall give unto me. Let me now,

(1.) Gather some Inferences from this Doctrine of the Believer's Triumph when Victory over Temptation is obtained through Faith in Christ. (1. *Inference.*) Hence learn how far the Joy and Triumph of Believers exceeds all the Joy and Triumph of Wicked and Carnal Men. They may outwardly rejoice in Carnal and Sensual Enjoyments, but in the midst of their Laughter their Hearts may be sad; and indeed they have ever Cause to be sad, if they consider the State and Condition they are in; but the Saints have always Cause of Rejoicing, and to live the Life of Praise and Thanksgiving, being delivered from the Power of Sin and Death. Carnal Mirth is not to be compared with Spiritual Joy. The Mirth of Wicked Men is but a kind of forced Mirth; take away these Carnal Things that feed it, and it dies; take away Wine from the Drunkard, and his Spirits grow flat, and he must seek Wine again, or else his Mirth is gone; take away Corn, and Wine, and Oil from a Carnal Worldling, and he can have no Joy; there is no inward Spring of Joy in his Heart, but what must be supply'd from without; but a true Believer hath Joy in himself, he hath Christ in his Heart, which is a Spring of Living Waters, continually in

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one respect or other ever flowing forth in him ; the Pipes indeed may sometimes be stopped by the not duly Exercising and Living by Faith ; but remove this Stop, and exercise Faith, and it Flows again. These are the Waters of Life that flow from Christ, and the Principle of Spiritual Life in the Heart. It is but Carnal Things that beget this Joy in Carnal Men ; it is Carnal Things that by their Confluence must support and keep it Alive ; and it is in and by Carnal Things that they express and manifest it ; it is by Vain and Worldly

Rom. 14. 17. Mirth that they express their Joy and Triumph in Meats, and Drinks, and Carnal Pleasures ; but the Believer's Rejoicing is in

Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy

Rom. 5. 5. Ghost. God gives to Believers the Earnest of his Spirit, and by this Spirit sheds abroad the Love of God in the Believer's Heart, *i. e.* a Sence of God's Love to him, and hereby draws out the Souls real Love to God and Christ, which engageth him heartily in the Cause and Quarrel of Christ, and to strive with all his Might to overcome all Enemies and Opposers ; the Love of Christ constrains him hereunto. This Love to Christ strongly inclines the Believer's Heart to lay out himself to the utmost in the Service of Christ ; and therefore the Believer having got the Victory over Temptation by the Grace and Assistance of the Spirit of Christ, he now Rejoiceth and Triumphs, not in himself, but in the Grace and Spirit of Christ, and say,

2 Cor. 5. 14.

Fa.

say, *Thanks be*
Victory through 1
 gives him further
 that God hath give
 by whom he hath ob
 and this encourageth him to
 shall be kept by the Power of this
 which dwells in him, through Faith to
 Salvation. By this Trial and Victory Faith, 10.
 he is confirmed and strengthened to hope
 for a final Victory at last. The Power of
 God keeps Faith alive, and by Faith we
 overcome all Temptations that would
 draw us from Christ; and this fills the
 Soul with abundant Joy and Rejoicing in
 the Resurrection of Christ, and to Rejoice,
 which assures us of our Resurrection to
 Glory at last, and gives the Believer a
 Prospect of this Glory. This makes the Joh. 14.
 Soul in Love with an unseen Christ, and 19.
 to Rejoice in him with Joy unspeakable, Joh. 6. 37.
 and full of Glory; by this Victory of Faith &c.
 we have good Hopes that we are United
 to Christ; and our Union with an Ever-
 living, Never-dying Christ, assures us that
 we shall never die, or be totally and finally
 overcome. Christ will lose none that be-
 long to him, or that are given him of the Joh. 10.
 Father. 27, &c.

Nay, the Souls of Believers are so lifted
 up with Love to, and Rejoicing in Christ,
 and their Union with him through Faith,
 that they reckon their Sufferings for
 Christ, howsoever they be, not worthy to
 be compared with the Glory that shall be Rom. 8. 18.
 revealed Ver. 38, 39.

nph.

lude, that no-
from the Love
shall break this
dly Mens Joy and
confluence of outward
nings, when he abounds in
ward and worldly Prosperity, as
see, *Psal.* 73. But that which filled
David's Heart with Joy, was the Light of
God's Countenance. They having got
Victory over Temptations, which threat-
ned the Life of their Souls, this is the
Cause of their Triumph.

Again, Carnal Men Rejoice in, and Boast
of themselves, and therefore Sacrifice to
Isa. 42. 8. their Nets, Praise themselves, and so Rob
God of his Glory, which he is ever tender
of, and will not give to another; but Be-
lievers give the Glory of their Success and
Psal. 115. 1. Deliverance to God. Not unto us, but
to thy Name, we give the Glory; for
thy Mercy and Truth is the Language of
a Believer. Nay, the Believer Rejoiceth in
the Condescending Grace and Love of
Christ, that hath taken notice of, suppor-
ted and strengthened such a Poor, Weak
and Worthless Soul, to chuse Christ for
his Portion, by Faith to take hold of his
Strength, and to stand the Shock and
Strength of Temptation, and hath enabled
him to overcome. This tends to the
Humbling and Abasing of themselves, but
the Exaltation of the Free Grace of God
in Christ. This is the Cause of their Tri-
umph and Admiration; who am I that
God

God should thus take notice of, and support such a Worm as I am ?

Again, their reflecting upon the Enemy that are overcome through the Grace of Christ, and Help of his Spirit, exalts their Triumph yet higher ; it is not Mean and Inconsiderable Enemies that they have contended with, and got some small Victory over, but it is Principalities, and Powers ; not Bodily Enemies that threatened the Hurt of the outward Man, but Spiritual Enemies, that threatned the Death of the Soul. It is Satan, the World, and their own Lusts, that they have Conquered. It is a greater Victory for a Man to overcome himself, than to Conquer a City ; in this Victory therefore they Triumph, which Wicked Men have no Cause to do ; for they are led Captive by Satan and their own Lusts, and are Slaves to the World.

Eph. 6. 12.

(2. *Inference.*) What Cause then have they to mourn and hang down the Head, that are overcome by Trials and Temptations ? If the Saints have Cause to Triumph and Rejoice, surely the Wicked have Cause to Mourn ; when the Godly, through the Strength of Temptation, have been overcome, though but for a time, yet it hath caused great Mourning and Grief of Heart, as it did in *David*, *Peter*, and others. Nay, though the Wound that Temptation hath given them be healed, through pardoning Grace, yet their Comforts have not been speedily restored ; nay,

- at their own remembrance of them all their Lives after their Sorrows have been renewed, as it was with *David* ; but how much more Cause have Wicked Men, and Apostates, to mourn and hang down the Head that are totally overcome. Nay, with what terrified Countenance will they look, when at Death and Judgment their Consciences are thoroughly awakened ; for God abhors them, and can take no Pleasure in them. Christ will reject them at the last Day, whatever they now pretend to ; if we deny him, he will deny us ; their drawing back will be to the Perdition of their Souls. Satan that hath been their Tempter, will then be their Accuser and Tormenter ; and their own Consciences, that they have seared and laid asleep through Custom and Practice, and might not be heard speak, shall then be fully awakened, and reveal what is therein Recorded, and be as a Thousand Witnesses against them.
- Pfal. 38. This Book shall be opened, and there they shall read all their Sins set in order before them.
- Heb. 10. 28. Hence learn how Good and Excellent a thing it is to draw nigh to God, and make him our Portion, and to trust under the Shadow of the Almighty, under the Wing of Christ ; for whatever befalls him here in this World, he may yet say, *The Lines are fallen to me in pleasant Places ; I have a goodly Heritage. I have set the Lord always before me ; he is at my Right-Hand, therefore I shall never be moved. There.*
- Mat. 7. 22, 23. 2 Tim. 2. 12. Mat. 10. 33. Heb. 10. 39. Rev. 20. 12. Psal. 50. 21. Psal. 73. 28. Psal. 16. 5, 6. Ver. 8, 9.

Therefore my Heart is glad, my Glory rejoiceth, and my Flesh resteth in Hope. My Flesh and Heart may fail me, but God is the Strength of my Heart, and Portion for ever; whom have I in Heaven but thee? Or on Earth that I can desire besides thee? Thou holdest me by my Right-Hand, guidest me with thy Counsel, and afterwards shall receive me to Glory. It is better to trust in the Lord, than in any Worldly thing, than in Kings and Princes. Therefore happy is the Man that hath the God of Jacob for his help, whose is in the Lord his God. It is better to trust in Christ, and keep under the Shadow of his Wing, than to trust in our own Gifts and Graces; for not only Flesh, but Heart may fail us, our Faith and other Graces may fail us: But they that trust in the Lord shall be as Mount Zion, which can never be moved. Christ hath overcome the World, and therefore they need not fear any Force that the World can raise against them. We need not let our Hearts be troubled, if he give us his Peace. This is a perfect Peace that none can rob us of; he hath set at Liberty the Captives, and opened the Prison Doors to them that were bound. He hath bound the Strong Man armed, and cast him out. Happy therefore is the Man that gets under the saving Conduct of Christ's Wing.

(4.) Hence we may learn the Excellency and Usefulness of Faith, if it be a right and

true Faith. Now this we may by these Properties of it.

(1.) It is a Self-abasing and Humbling Faith. It abaseth Self, but exalteth Christ and Free Grace in him. He whose Heart is lifted up, his Heart is not right in him; but a sound Believer, though he live, yet it is not he, but the Grace of Christ in him; he lives by the Faith of the Son of God. And therefore when he is Weak in himself, he is Strong in Christ. (2.) It is a fruitful, active and working Faith; Faith without Works is Dead, being alone. Works by Love keeps God's Commandments, and they are not grievous, but he takes Pleasure therein. It is Duty that his Eye is fixed upon, whatever Difficulties lye in the way; yea, he runs the Way of God's Commandments with enlarged Heart, runs with Patience the Race set before him; he sets Christ before him as his Patern and Example. Obedience is part of his New Nature, and a Work that he delights in, for he is Spiritually minded. (3.) It is a Faith grounded upon the whole Word of God as its general Object, and upon Christ as its special Object. True Faith believes the whole Word of God upon the Testimony of God whose Word it is. He believes that God is what he hath revealed himself in his Word to be, that he is ever mindful of his Covenant, and faithful to his Word and Promise, and therefore a plentiful Rewarded of them that diligently seek him. The special Object

Heb. 2. 4.

Gal. 2. 20.

2 Cor. 12.

19.

Jam. 2. 17.

Gal. 5. 6.

1 Joh. 5.

3.

Heb. 12.

1, 2.

Heb. 11. 6.

ject of Faith is Jesus Christ, in whom all the Promises of God are Yea and Amen ; who by his Purchase hath made the Covenant of Grace an everlasting Covenant, ordered in all things, and sure ; yea, an Irrevocable Will and Testament, being Sealed in his Blood ; hereby even unseen things are realized by Faith, as if in actual Possession ; by this Faith it is that the Just lives, and believes to the saving of the Soul. Heb. 11. 1. Heb. 10. 38, 39.

(4.) It is a Faith mixed with Fear ; not a distrustful, but a cautious Fear, and a Jealousie of our own Hearts, which begets Watchfulness and Circumspection, and a frequent Search and Examination of the Heart by the Touch-stone of the Word ; a true Believer is always upon his Guard, knowing that he is compassed about with Snares and Temptations, at no time, nor in any place free. Therefore, saith Christ, *Watch and Pray that ye enter not into Temptation.* Mat. 26. 41. Nay, be watchful against the first Appearances of Temptation ; by this the Prudent Man foresees the Evil, and hides himself. Prov. 22. 3.

(5.) True Faith is diligent in the Search and Study of the Scriptures, that therein and thereby he may know and do his Duty in all Respects, in one thing as well as another, both towards God, himself, and all Men. He doth not as Wicked Men or Hypocrites do, cast the Word behind their Backs, and walk after the Imaginations of their own lust- ing Hearts, and not according to the Perfect Rule of God's Word ; nor doth he give

Joh. 3. 21.

Psalm. 19. 7, &c.

give it only a sleight and superficial Reading of it, but meditates and ponders it in his Heart ; he takes delight in Meditating therein, and in getting the Knowledge of his Duty thereby ; and he makes it his Business to regulate his Life thereby ; it is the delight of his Heart to know it, because he delights to do it, and to regulate his Life and Practice by it ; he searcheth to know the Mind and Meaning of the Spirit in it, and therefore compares Spiritual Things with Spiritual ; by this he keeps himself from the Paths of Wicked Men. Now these and such like are the Properties of true Faith ; now this Faith is a most useful and excellent Grace ; as will appear if we consider,

(1.) It quickens and encourageth unto all Duties, and fortifies the Soul against all Temptations. The Unbeliever's Faith, with the Sluggard, there is a Lion without, therefore he dare not go forth, or attempt any difficult Duty, nor withstand any Temptation, lest he receive Hurt and Damage by it, either in his Person, Estate, Worldly Credit and Applause, nor any other Worldly Interest : But the Righteous is bold as a Lion, dare Encounter any Spiritual Enemy, or do whatever God calls him to ; read *Heb. 11*. Nay, though it may sometimes be foiled, yet it doth not therefore leave off the Conflict, or yeild it self as wholly Conquer'd, but renews its Combat and Conflict. The Believer will use his own Strength, in the Use of all

all prescribed Means for its Support, make use of all Spiritual Weapons, and put on the whole Armour of God. Nay, he will try the Strength and Faithfulness of God to the furthest, rather than yeild. Nay, though Christ seem to delay, yet he will still trust in him, and patiently wait for his Salvation in the way of his Duty, and say with *Job*, *Though he Kill me, yet I will trust in him*, I will not let go my Confidence in him. Eph. 6.

(2.) Faith beats us off from all Self-Confidence, makes us beware of ruining our selves presumptuously upon any Temptations, but makes us strong in the Lord, and in the Power of his Might. He that trusteth in his own Strength, and neglects the Means prescribed by Christ for his Support, is nearest to a most dangerous Fall. Thus it was with *Peter*, he was confident in himself, but neglected to Watch and Pray, and we see the Issue, how foul and gross his Fall was; but it was not so with *Paul*, when a Messenger of Satan was sent to buffet him, he watched and prayed to purpose, and by this obtained Assurance that God's Grace should be sufficient for him, and God's Strength made perfect in his Weakness. Faith fetcheth in sufficient Supplies from Christ by fervent and believing Prayer; when Faith begins to faint, it fetcheth Recruits and Cordials from Christ, and from his Word and Promises draws Water of Refreshment from these Wells of Salvation.

(3.) Faith

(3.) Faith renders what we do acceptable to God through Christ, though accompanied with manifold Weaknesses and Imperfections as it comes from us ; for *with-*
Heb. 11. 6. out Faith it is impossible to please God. The
Jam. 1. 6. Word profits nothing, if not mixed with
 Faith in them that hear it : Prayer avail-
 eth nothing, if it be not believing Prayer.

(4.) Faith looks through the darkeſt Providences, and gives a Proſpect of Support under Trials, and Deliverance out of them at laſt.

2 Tim. 1. 14. I know whom I have believed, ſaith Paul,
and that he is able to keep that which I have

committed to him ; it ſupports and comforts the Soul under all Difficulties ; the Life of Faith is not only a more Safe, but a more Eaſie and Comfortable Life than the Life of Senſe ; a Man may live quietly in the Harbour of Faith, when others are tossed to and fro by the Boiſterous Waves of Senſe, and therefore is called an Anchor. This Hope takes hold within the Vail, *i. e.* upon God himſelf, upon a Throne of Grace, and upon Chriſt as our Interceſſor at the Right-Hand of God in Heaven it ſelf, typified by the moſt Holy Place ; the believing Soul can reſt ſecure under Chriſt's Wing in the miſt of moſt Boiſterous Storms without ; when all other things fail, yet Faith will not fail, having as an Anchor ſure hold of Jeſus Chriſt, and relying upon his Strength and Power, and the Prevalency of his Meritorious Interceſſion with the Father ; Faith in

in this Case is both a Shield to defend us from all the Fiery Darts of Satan, or his Instruments, and a Sword to wound Satan himself in his Temptations. It Vanquisheth Satan, and Drives him away from us. This it doth by the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. In the Word the Believer finds the Commands of God, both what he Commands, and what he Forbids, and finds the Stamp of Divine Authority upon them, who ought to be feared and obeyed above all, both upon the account of his Sovereign Authority, and his Punishing Power. Here the Soul meets with precious Promises to encourage us unto Duty and Threatnings, to deter us from Sin. Here he meets with wonderful Instances of God's Special Care and Support of his People under the greatest of Temptations, and of his Righteous Executing of Threatned Judgments upon Wicked and Rebellious Sinners. All these Faith believes, and therefore orders his Conversation according thereunto. And therefore,

(5.) Faith may not unfitly be called the Believer's Purveyor or Caterer, that goes forth into the Markets, and brings in whatever the Soul stands in need of; other Graces feed upon, and are supported by these Provisions and Supplies that Faith brings in; but it is Faith that goeth forth to the Markets and Places where they are to be had; and Faith knows a good Bargain, where it meets with it, and what Use to make of it. Wisdom, either Spi-
† ritual

ritual Wisdom, or Christ the Eternal Wisdom of the Father, brings all her Riches, Treasures and Provisions to the Market of the Word and Ordinances, and there offers them to Sale, and there Faith is ready to Buy ; we see the Invitation and Call of Wisdom, where she shews also the Excellency of her Commodities, *Prov.* 1. 20, 21, 22, 23. *Prov.* 4. 5, &c. Chap. 5. 1, 2. Chap. 8. 1, 10, 22. See also *Isa.* 55. 1. *Rev.* 3. 18. There is nothing that the Soul can stand in need of but Wisdom hath it here to sell ; here Faith may be fully furnished ; here is Provisions of all sorts of Food, for all Persons ; Milk for Babes, and Strong Meat for Strong Men ; buy Wine and Milk. Art thou Hungry ? Here is the Bread of Life, here is the Body and Blood of Christ, which is Meat and Drink indeed : Art thou Athirst ? Come to the Waters and Drink. These are Living Waters that will spring up in thee to everlasting Life : Here is not only necessary Food for the bare Support of Spiritual Nature, but here is rich Cordials, plentiful, rich and costly Feasts. Christ's Love is better than the choicest Wine, and his Name, or whatever he makes himself known by, is as perfuming Ointment, which cause the Virgins to love him. And therefore the Believer sits down under Christ's Shadow with great Delight, and his Fruit is pleasant to his Taste ; Christ brings him into his Banqueting-House, and his Banner over him is Love. Doth
the

Isa. 55. 1.

Heb. 5. 12,

&c.

Joh. 6. 55.

Cant. 5. 1.

Joh. 4. 14.

Psal. 63. 5,

6.

Cant. 1. 2,

3.

Cant. 2. 3,

4.

the Soul want Riches? Here is the choicest Riches in the World to be had, Gold tried in the Fire, Riches far more Excellent than Rubies, Durable Riches and Righteousness, Riches that will not perish or waste in the using; we have, *Cant. 5. 9, &c.* a description of the Excellencies and Perfections of Christ from Head to Foot, and this Character the Spouse gives of him.

It is Faith and Experience that have discovered by the Word these Excellencies to her, and raised her Affections to him in the highest Degree: She by her Knowledge and Acquaintance with him can give this Description of him; is it Pleasures that the Soul wants? *In his Presence* Psa. 16.
is fulness of Joy, and Pleasures for evermore. II.
Here is cloathing, even White and Pure, to cover our Nakedness, and Eye-Salves to clear our Eye-Sight, both with respect to God, and his Mind and Will, and with respect to our Selves, that we may not judge amiss of our Selves and our own State, and that we may see the right Way wherein we ought to walk; do our Rev. 3. 18.
wounded Souls want Physick or Healing? Here is Balm in *Gilead*, and a Physician here to heal all our Maladies. Here is a Salve for every Sore, a Medicine for every Disease, Food for all Conditions, Succour and Support against all Temptations, reviving Cordials against all Faintings, Recovery from all Falls, Help and Plentiful Supply in every Case; we might as soon make a new *Bible*, as to set forth
all

all the Excellencies of Spiritual Wisdom; and the Richest and Choicest Commodities that she hath to sell; for every Page of the Bible is filled with some or other of them. There is no Ordinance or Duty but there is something of the Excellency and Preciousness of Christ to be found there. In the Word read or heard, in the Sacraments, in Meditation and Prayer. And if by Faith we bring our Souls to, and feed upon what is here to be had, let us open our Mouths, enlarge our Expectations never so high, but Wisdom is able to fill them.

Now Faith comes to all these Markets, and (as to it, self) with an empty Purse, *Isa. 55. 1.* and yet here she may Buy without Money, and without Price: Faith shall not go away empty for want of Money, for Christ hath purchased and paid for them, and freely gives them to the believing Receiver. And Faith knowing the Excellency and Worth of these choice Rarities that here Wisdom offers to Sale, and their Suitableness to the Soul's Necessity, Faith buys them, brings them home to the Soul, particularly applies them, and feeds the Soul with them, according to its present Occasion, and gives the Soul a sweet Relish of them by its Spiritual Sences; the Soul is abundantly refreshed by them: Love, Joy, Patience, Self-denial, Submission of our Wills to the Will of God, Courage and Magnanimity to go through all Trials, and stedfast Resolutions to hold out unto the end, and to give all Cheerful,

ful, Hearty, and Universal Obedience to God's Will and Law, and all other Graces of the Spirit, in Expectation of full Victory over all Spiritual Enemies at last, and a Glorious Reward of Triumphant Glory after all. It is Faith that helps the Soul to understand, believe, and apply, and feed upon all the Rarities of Divine Wisdom, to go from Flower to Flower in all God's Garden, and to gather Honey and Sweetness from it for the Soul's Refreshment: It makes a singular Use of the Word, both for Instruction, Counsel and Comfort; it makes use of the Sacraments, as a most rich and delightful Feast, where the Soul meets with Christ, feeds upon his Body and Blood, and qualifies the Soul for Communion with, and Feasting upon Christ at his Holy Table, where his Choice Perfumes, and Tokens of Love are better to the Soul than the choicest Wine, or most rich Perfumes, and by these draws the Soul to run after him, and the Spikenard or Graces of the Soul to send forth its pleasant Smell; so that as the Soul rejoiceth and solaceth it self in the Enjoyment of Christ, and his Benefits and Blessings, so Christ himself is delighted and pleased with his own Graces, that now flow forth, and give a pleasant smell. Yea, Faith helps to make good Use and Improvement not only of all Ordinances, but of all Providences and Occurrences that happen; without Faith all these Benefits and Privileges are lost. Nay yet further, as Faith
H brings

brings in all these, and many more Supplies to the Soul, so Faith it self hath its share in the Benefits and Advantages of them; Faith by all the Varieties and Benefits that it brings in, keeps the Soul in good Plight, and all other Graces in due Exercise, according to the Place, Office, and Capacity that they are in; and also is hereby it self kept in good Order, and fit for its Imployment; it receives renewed Strength, whereby it is enabled to go forth again, and fetch in further Supplies as Occasion requires; Faith works Experience, and Experience Hope; and hereby Faith it self is strengthened, and God is more firmly believed and trusted in. And therefore the Just are said to live by Faith; it is the very Vítal Principle of Life in the Soul, which keeps all other Graces Alive and Active in the Soul; and by what it feeds upon is it self kept Alive also; *By Grace we are saved through Faith, and are kept by the Power of God to Salvation.*

Rom. 5.
1, &c.
2 Cor. 1.
9, 10.
Hab. 2. 4.
Eph. 2. 6.

1 Pet. 1.
5.

(6.) Faith is an Universal and Cardinal Grace, and that both in respect of its Object and its Influence that it hath upon the Soul, and all other Graces. It hath the whole Word of God for its general Object, and whole Christ for its special Object. Christ is made to us Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. And in reference to all other Habits of Grace in the Soul, it hath the greatest Influence and Efficacy upon them. It works

1 Cor. 1.
30.
Gal. 5. 6.

works by Love, it purifies the Heart, renders what we do acceptable to God. It gives us a Spiritual Discerning of Spiritual Things, and how far they exceed in worth all Carnal Things; all other Graces are but Additions to Faith. God hath given us Divine and Precious Promises, whereby we are made Partakers of the Divine Nature by these being Believers, and applied, work in us all other Graces. Nay, Faith is the Root from whence all other Graces must proceed, and are formed up into Divine Graces; for without Faith, if they spring not from this Root, they are but Shadows of Moral Virtues; for *without Faith it is impossible to please God.* Hence it is that it hath such a powerful Influence upon all our Duties, to qualifie them aright, so as to render them acceptable to God, and profitable to our selves. The Word is but a Dead Letter, and signifies little if it be not mixed with Faith in them that hear it. The Sacrament edifies not, but we Eat and Drink Judgment to our selves, if by Faith we discern not the Lord's Body; Prayer availeth nothing, if it proceeds not from Faith. It is Faith that must justifie us, and give us Peace with God, and in our own Consciences; Faith works in us Love to God, to his Will and Ways, makes all his Ways Pleasantness and Peace, his Commandments not grievous, helps us to Rejoice and Triumph in Trials and Tribulations, fills us with Joy in the Holy Ghost,

1 Cor. 2.

14.

2 Pet. 1. 5.

Heb. 11. 6.

Heb. 4. 2.

1 Cor. 11.

Rom. 8.
39.

works in us Patience and Experience of God's Love and Faithfulness, and this begets in us Hope of Success and Victory at last ; works in us Increase of Grace, and enables us to Persevere therein to the end ; and ties an Indissoluble Knot of Faith and Love, that nothing is or shall be able to dissolve or *separate us from the Love of God which is in Christ Jesus or Lord.* Oh what an excellent and generally useful Grace is Faith ! And if it makes us thus to Rejoice and Triumph in particular Victories over Trials and Tribulations, what will the Triumph of Faith be, when we have through Faith gotten a full and final Victory over all our Spiritual Enemies at last, hath lifted us up above the Gun-shot of all Temptations, and Crowned us with Triumphant Glory ? But of this more afterwards ; (*ver. 2.*) let be of Exhortation or Advice and Counsel upon several Accounts, since Faith so Triumphs in Victory over Temptations.

(1.) See that your Faith be of the right Stamp ; you have seen how many sorts of false Faith there are, which will give no real Victory, nor administer true Cause of Triumph and Rejoicing. Therefore look to your Faith that it be true and rightly grounded, such as will abide the Trial, and be more precious than that of Gold when it is tried in the Fire.

1 Pet. I. 7.

(2.) Do you often try your Faith to see that it be good and right, and will abide when tried, knowing the Deceitfulness of
your

your Hearts, that will be apt to puff you up with a groundless, presumptuous Confidence, and to deceive you when ye come to need it, as *Peter's* Confidence did? He pretended a strong Faith, but neglected the Means to support it, (Watchfulness and Prayer) and we see what his Self-confidence ended in; he shamefully denied Christ, and his Recovery cost him dear.

(3.) Keep Faith in continual Exercise; live by it through the whole Course of your Lives; your Faith must be a living, working Faith; for if it have not Works, it is Dead, being alone; we have constant need of Faith that may work in us Patience and Perseverance. God may put us to wait, though he will never stay beyond his appointed time; therefore he that believes must not make haste.

(4.) Rejoice in Tribulations and Sufferings as they are Trials of your Faith; put a difference between Trials of Faith, which proceed from God for our Good and Benefit; and real Temptations, which proceed from our own Lust, and entice or seduce us unto Sin.

(5.) Let your Joy and Triumph be in Christ, who gives us the Victory through Faith; and not in our selves, or any thing that we our selves have done. It is he that gives us the Victory, and not we our selves; no, not our own Faith as ours, but as given and supported by him, and in not suffering us to be tempted above what we are able.

H 3

(6.) Let

(6.) Let not our Joy be a Carnal, but a Spiritual Joy ; a rejoicing in the Lord, and joying in the God of our Salvation ; let it be a Joy in the Holy Ghost ; say with the Apostle, I am Crucified to the World, and yet I live, and yet not I, but the Grace of Christ that liveth in me ; the Life that
Gal. 2. 20. I live by the Faith of the Son of God.

(7.) Rejoice in Hopes of full Victory at last through Faith in Christ.

(8.) Rejoice more in Victory over Temptations, than in all outward and worldly things. Let this be your *Rejoicing, the Testimony of your Consciences, that in Simplicity and Godly Sincerity, not in Fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God ye have had your Conversation in the World.* Rejoice not so much in what ye have done by the Grace of Christ bestowed upon you, as in this, that your Names are written in Heaven, and that Christ through Grace hath glorified himself in you, and by you.
2 Cor. 1. 12.
Luke 10. 20.

(9.) Beware of smiling, flattering Temptations, for they are more dangerous, and often hurtful, (if not destructive to the Soul) than those that are more rugged and stormy. Stormy Temptations will make you to wrap your selves more closely in Christ's Mantle, and to keep close under the Shadow of his Wing ; whereas more warming and pleasant Gales will make you to cast off your Spiritual Garments, and to live more by Sence than by Faith. Spiritual Temptations more secretly and insensibly insinuate themselves into our
Carnal

Carnal Affections, than Temporal Tribulations. The Soul is in more danger of Spiritual Harm in Prosperity than in Adversity. Adversity many times drives the Soul to Christ, and causeth him to take faster hold upon Christ and his Promises; whereas Prosperity insensibly creeps into the Heart, and steals that away from Christ, and from our dependance upon him, being taken up with Sensual and Flesh-pleasing Delights, which are very grateful to the Carnal Appetite; we are apt to forget our Work, and the Journey we are going, when we fix our Eye upon the Vanities and Pleasures of this Life; and so are we apt to do when the World flows in upon us in abundance; when the Rich Man's Ground brought him in great plenty, he saith, *Soul, thou hast Goods laid up for many Years, Eat, Drink, and be Merry*, not considering what should become of his Soul which should be taken from him that Night. It was none of the least Commendations of *Job*, who was so Rich and Great a Man, and abounded in all manner of Worldly Prosperity, that yet he was so excellent a Man for Grace and Holiness, and that every Way, and in every Relation and Capacity, that there was none like one that truly feared, and is acknowledged by God as his choice Servant, and eschewed Evil. It is less hurtful to a Man when God takes from him all outward and visible Comforts, (for this he may do, and yet love him

Luke 12.

19, 20.

Job 1.

Heb. 12.

6, 7, 8.

Isa. 1.

Psal. 81.

Luk. 18.

23, to 28.

1 Tim. 6.

9, 10.

never the worse still) than when he takes away Himself, and his Love from the Soul. It was very dreadful when God said, *Wherefore should ye be smitten any more?* Ye will revolt more and more; or as of Ephraim, *He is joined to Idols, let him alone*; or as it is said, *So I gave them up to their own Hearts Lust.* No Man knows whether he shall run, when grown Wanton by Prosperity; he is given up to his Extravagant and never to be satisfied Lusts. And these Prosperity exposeth a Man unto, unless qualified with abundance of Grace, (as Job was) and be extraordinary watchful. How many good Desires and Intentions are choaked by the Riches and Vanities of the World, and come to nothing at last? The Rich Man in the Gospel had some good Desires after Heaven; but if it must cost him the parting with his Estate, and taking up a Cross to follow Christ, this he could not consent to. Therefore our Saviour makes it next to an Impossibility for a Rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; nay, if all things were not possible to God, no Rich Man could possibly enter into Heaven. And the Apostle tells us the reason of it. The Rich Man looks all downward upon his Riches and Enjoyments, though this be the most he gets by them, the beholding of them with his Eyes; he can enjoy and make no further use of them than for Food and Raiment, yet these he Doats upon, and Glories in; whereas let the Poor

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Man

Man look down into the World, and there is nothing but dismal Darknes about him; it is the Rich that here enjoys his Good Things, the Poor hath only his Evil Things; he hath no comfortable Prospect, but by looking upward to the Things which are only visible to the Eye of Faith. *Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of his Faith,* and the Patern that he hath set before him. Looking to the Covenant and Promises thereof, and making sure to get a Saving Interest in Christ by this Covenant; and hereby he sees the Crown of Glory, and Recompence of Reward set before him; and this makes him intent upon his Work and Journey, and to *press towards the Mark, for the Price of the high Calling of God in Christ Jesus.* Therefore a low and suffering State is less dangerous and hurtful to the Soul, than a visible prosperous State is. *For to be Carnally minded is Death, but to be Spiritually minded is Life and Peace.* Rom. 8. 6.

(10.) As thou lookest, and thou hopest for a Crown of Glory, and Day of Triumph hereafter, so (with all thy Might and Skill) be preparing for it whilst thou art here in this Life. This is the Time and Place of Preparation that thou mayest meet the Lord with Comfort at his coming. There is a Rest and glorious Crown reserved and laid up for the Saints in Heaven; yea, so Great and Glorious, that *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, nor hath entered into the Heart of Man to conceive what* 1 Cor. 9. 2.

- what God hath prepared for them that love him, and long for his Appearance ; nay, so far do they exceed not only Sense and Reason, but even the Apprehensions of Faith here, that when the Saints come to enjoy them, they will stand amazed, and*
- 2 Theff. 1. 10. *wonder what Christ will do with them, he heaps such unexpected and wonderful Weight of Glory upon. O how light and small will the Sufferings and Hardships that the Saints have undergone here be esteemed by them, when these light Afflictions which have endured but for a Moment, have wrought out for them a far more Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory!*
- 2 Cor. 4. 16, 17. *With what Diligence and Circumspection then ought we to Work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling ; fearing lest*
- Phil. 3. 12, 13. *through Unbelief, or neglect of our Work, we should fail or fall short of this Crown*
- 1 Joh. 3. 1, 2, 3. *of Glory ? Now he that hath this Hope, purifies himself, even as God is pure ; we must be made meet for this Inheritance, must be delivered from the Power of Darknest, and translated into the Kingdom of Christ.*
- Colof. 1. 12, 13. *The Bride must Deck and Adorn her self for the coming of the Bridegroom, and must be always ready, because she knows not the Hour when he will come, lest at his coming he should find her unready, as the foolish Virgins were, and so be shut out from the Marriage Solemnity. Let us always have our Wedding Garments ready, and put on, that when we expect to Feast with Christ at his Table for ever, he may not*

Faith's Trial and Triumph.

III

not say, *How camest thou in hither, not having on a Wedding Garment?* If thou be'st found so, thou wilt not only be Speechless, but cast out for ever; and what an horrible Disappointment will this be? It would make a Man tremble to think with what Horrible Confounded Looks the unprepared Sinners will look, when they see the Saints Cloathed with the Robes of Christ's Righteousness, having through Faith Washed their Garments in the Blood of the Lamb, and Cloathed in White Robes of the Saints, and themselves in their Filthy Rags of Sin and Guilt; when all things are prepared and made ready, on Christ's part, for a Triumphant and Everlasting Feast of Glory, and the Saints lifting up their Heads in Triumph and Glory, having by Faith Conquered all their Enemies, and (with the *Egyptians* leaving them dead upon the Sea-shoar) got safe through the Red-Sea of this sinful and troublesome World; and now Triumphant with Christ in Glory; with what Horror will the Wicked look upon this Sight, when they in their filthy Garments are shut out, and must have no share in this Joy, but cast into the Lake for ever to continue there? How will they Curse the Day that they neglected their Preparation Work? Let us therefore take heed, lest through our neglect we be not found unprepared.

Let me add one Use more from this Doctrine.

If the Triumph of Saints shall be so great when their Faith hath been tried, and they have obtained Victory over Temptations through Faith, and especially when they have obtained full and final Victory over all their Enemies, and are got above the reach of all Temptations; what Support, Comfort and Encouragement may this be to Believers, to run with Patience the Race set before them, and to Persevere in Faith and Patience to the end; may I not Expostulate with thee as *David* did with his own Soul? *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul? Why art thou disquieted in me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise him, who is the Health of my Countenance, and my God.* Thy Flesh may for the present fail thee; yea, and thy Heart too, but *God is the Strength of thine Heart, and will be thy Portion for ever*; thou hast been tempted and tried, and that with Fiery Trials; thou hast gone through Fire and Water; yea, Temptation hath been so strong upon thee, that thou hast been ready to say with the Psalmist, *I have cleansed my Heart in vain, and washed my Hands in Innocency, for still I am chastened every Morning, Tribulations come as dully as the Morning. They are so constant, so accumulated and heaped one upon the Back of another, and so aggravated by the Circumstances that accompany them, that I am never able to bear them; I can see no end of them; and my Faith is so baffled, and Patience worn out,*

Psal. 42.
11.

Psal. 73.
25, 26.

Psal. 73.
13, 14.

out, that I fear I shall never see through them. Nay, I fear that God hates me, is become mine Enemy, and hath no Love or Kindness for me.

If this be thy Case, let me speak something for thy Comfort, and for the Strengthening and Encouraging thee to hold out in the Exercise of Faith and Patience to the end; let not go thy Confidence which hath great Recompence of Reward; *For he that shall come, will come, and not tarry* a Minute beyond his appointed time; only live by and exercise Faith and Patience; for thou hast need of Patience, not only in doing and suffering the Will of God, but in waiting for the time of God's Deliverance; for the Vision is for an appointed time, and he that believes, shall not make haste, or ever be confounded; ye have heard of the Patience of *Job*, and seen the end of the Lord, therefore hold on in Faith and Patience, and be not discouraged at the Difficulties ye meet with, nor the unbelieving Fears that discourage and dishearten you. Though Flesh and Heart may fail you, and your Faith be for the present staggered, yet give not all up for lost, but renew your Combat and Conflict, and ye shall find Faith come off Conqueror at last. For, (1.) True Faith was never totally and finally overcome; but though it hath for a time been baffled and foiled, yet it hath renewed its Strength again, and hath overcome at last. It hath too firm a Foundation that it is built and bottomed

Heb. 10.
35.

Jam. 1.11.

Mat. 7.
24, &c.

bottomed upon, ever to be battered down by the strongest Storms and Tempests that can come, for it is founded upon a Rock. It is built upon Jesus Christ, who is the Author and Finisher, or Perfecter of our Faith, who is able to save to the utmost all that come to God by him, since he ever lives to make Intercession for us. It is built upon the Everlasting and Unchangeable Covenant and Promises, which are the Sure Mercies of *David*. It is through the Merits of Christ that the *Promises of God* are made *Yea and Amen*. They are built upon the Oath of God, wherein it is impossible for God to Lie; for he can as soon cease to be God, as cease to be a God of Truth and Faithfulness.

Isa. 55. 3.

2 Cor. 1.
20.

Heb. 6. 17,
18.

(2.) It would be a very great piece of Injustice in God not to fulfil what he hath promised to Christ in the Covenant of Redemption; Christ hath fulfilled to a Tittle what God required of him as Redeemer, and therefore God is said to be just to forgive us our Sins. As it is a Righteous thing with God to take Vengeance upon the Persecutors and Oppressors of his People, so it is also an Act of Justice, a Righteous thing with God to give Rest unto his Saints from their Tribulations. If it cannot be so properly said that it is an Act of Justice, but rather of Grace to them, yet it is an Act of Justice unto Christ, who hath fulfilled to a Tittle all that was required of him in the Covenant of Redemption on his part, that God should

Joh. 1. 9.

2 Theff. 1.
6, 7.

should fulfil all that he hath promised to Christ upon his Undertaking and Fulfilling the Work of our Redemption ; and therefore he is advanced to the Right-Hand of the Father, to see all things fulfilled that God hath by Covenant engaged to do for the Redeemed Ones. And therefore by his Merit he makes continual Intercession for them, not in a Precarious way ; but by Virtue of his Merit he expects that all his, and his Members Enemies, should be trodden down and overcome. Christ expects it as a Matter of Right and Justice to him, and therefore is ever at God's Right-Hand to See and take Care of the fulfilling of every thing that God hath promised to his People upon the Account of the Merit of Christ ; and therefore if not upon thine own Account, yet upon Christ's Account, and his All-sufficient Merit and Mediation, thou may'st expect to come off Conqueror at last, if thou persevere in Faith unto the end, and to hold on in thy Conflict with Temptation, till God's appointed Time of Deliverance come. Can thine unbelieving Heart in the least question the Justice and Faithfulness of God to his Only, Well-beloved and Ever-pleasing Son, who was Faithful to his Covenant with his Father, and in all things performed his Father's Will and Pleasure ? Justice is one of the Essential Attributes of God. Just and Right is he ; it is part of his Name. And shall not the Judge of all the World do right ? And especially to his own Son, who hath paid

Rom.8.34.

Heb. 10.
13.

Deut.32.4.

paid so dear a Purchase for the obtaining of the Precious Promises made to his People? Go on therefore Courageously in thy Conflict with Temptation, in assured hope of full Victory at last; for the Covenant being made with Christ, he can never forfeit any Promise made therein unto his People and Members. Nay, all Power is put into the Hand of the Son, that he may see the Covenant exactly fulfilled to a Tittle. Nay, he delivers not up his Me-

1 Cor. 15. diatorial Kingdom to the Father till he see
24, &c. all these things actually fulfilled.

See Rom. 5. (3.) If whilst that thou wast an Ene-
8, 9, 10. my to Christ he so loved thee, as to give himself a Ransom for thee, and to redeem thee with his own Blood; how much more will he take care of thee to bring thee safe through all Trials, when through Faith thou art reconciled to him?

Luke 19. He came to seek and save that which was
10. lost, and will he again lose thee when thou art found, when thou art once got into the Hand of Christ, and made a Member of him through Faith? Is there any that can be able to pluck thee out of his Hand? Upon this account he assures us of Victory, and Everlasting Life and Salvation at last; stick but thou close to

Joh. 10. Christ by Faith, and go on chearfully in
27, 28. thy Warfare and Work, and Christ will
Heb. 13. 5. never fail thee. *Sion* under great and long continued Tribulation was ready to despond, (as thou dost) but see the Answer

Isa. 49. 14,
15, 16. of God in this Case.

(4.) It

(4.) It is Faith that Unites thee to Christ, and makes thee Alive in him, who is the Fountain of Life, and must support thee in Life, and bring thee through all Tribulations, and give the Victory at last. It is from this Fountain that thou must draw continually the Waters of Life; and it is by Faith that thou receivest, and art supported and supplied from time to time; for it is by Faith that thou standest; not upon thine own Legs, but by his Strength and Grace; and by this thou hast been supported and supplied hitherto; while Christ therefore lives to supply thee out of this over-flowing Fountain, why should'st thou despond? For because he lives thou shalt live also; only stick to him by Faith, maintain and keep up thy Union with him; what God said to *Abraham*, he saith to thee, I am God All-sufficient; walk before me, and be thou perfect, and I will be thy Shield, and exceeding great Reward. Therefore believe and hope in God, and it will be thy Righteousness, and the All-sufficient God will be to thee; when ever any distrustful, discouraging Thought would arise in thee, look unto Jesus Christ, to whom thou art United, and by whose Strength thou art Supported. It is thy Union with Christ that will uphold thee, if thou comest up out of the Wilderness leaning upon thy Beloved; and therefore with Hope and Confidence in him thou may'st say with the Apostle, *Who shall separate me from the Love of* Rom. 8.
Christ? 38, 29.

Pfal. 27.
1, &c.

Christ? I am perswaded that neither Death, nor Life, Angels, &c. shall separate me from the Love of God, which is Christ Jesus my Lord. Therefore with Rejoicing and Triumph say with the Psalmist, The Lord is my Light and Salvation, whom shall I fear? The Lord is the Strength of my Life, of whom shall I be afraid?

(5.) Consider who it is that hath hitherto upheld thee, and by whose Strength it is that thou yet standest; is it not by the Strength of Christ, and not thine own? Thou hast met with many Trials and Temptations in thy Life-time; it may be as great, or greater than these thou faintest under, and thou hast been helped through them, and by Grace thou still standest. Hath not the Strength of Christ been manifested in thy Weakness, so that when thou hast been weak in thy Self, thou hast been strong in Christ? And is not he the same, both for Wisdom, Power, and Love, that ever he was? Is his Arm
Isa. 59. 1. *shortned, that he cannot save? Or his Ear heavy, that he cannot hear?* Let not therefore thy unbelieving Heart cause him to hide his Face from thee that he will not hear; make therefore the same use of this Consideration that the Apostle doth.

He was troubled with a Messenger of Satan sent to Buffet him; he prays to be delivered from it; God promiseth that his Grace should be sufficient for him, and
2 Cor. 2. 7, his Strength made perfect in his Weakness,
8, 9, 10. and he found it so; for when he was weak

in

in Himself, then was he strong in Christ. Therefore he took Pleasure in Infirmities, in Reproaches, Persecutions, &c. And do thou the same, and depend upon the same Promise, for he is and will be the same to thee that he was to the Apostle? He is *the same, Yesterday, to Day, and for Ever*; from this Consideration the Apostle gathers a strong Ground of Hope for time to come; he hath delivered, and doth deliver, and he will yet deliver.

1 Cor. 1.
10.

(6.) Have not many others been as sorely Tempted, Tried and Exercised, as thou hast been or art; yea, and their Faith put to as great a Stand as thine is, and yet God hath given them Victory at last? What thinkest thou of *Abraham, David, Job*, and many others? And are not these Recorded in Scripture for the Encouragement of others in the like Cases, that *we through Patience and Comfort of the Scriptures might have Hope.* Let therefore the Experiences Recorded in Scripture, and in the History of all Ages, yea, and thine own Experiences, which thou hast gathered from the Observation of God's Dealings in this Case, either with thy self or others, encourage thee still to hope in God, and persevere in Faith and Patience to the end. Let not go therefore your Confidence in God, for he that hath promised to come will come in due time, and will not tarry. Thou hast the Promise of God for it. And a Promise of God, made Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus, is better Security

Rom. 15.4.

curity than any thing ; nay, than all the things in the World can give thee. To live by Faith upon the Promises, is the surest and most comfortable way of Living, for the Promise of God stands for ever sure. The Foundation of God, whether in Election, or the Work of Grace, and Principle of Holiness, which God hath laid as a Foundation in the Hearts of his Elect, stands sure, and is unchangeable, will never fail ; give me but one Instance in all the Scripture, or all Ages of the Church, where ever the Promise of God failed, and I will yeild the whole Cause ; but if thou canst not, why shouldst thou through Unbelief make thy self the only Instance ?

2 Tim. 2.
19.

(7.) If no future Reward were to be had, yet in keeping God's Commandments there is great Reward ; all God's Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all his Paths Peace ; Peace with God, and Peace and Comfort in our own Consciences.

Psal. 19.
11.

Nay, these very Trials and Afflictions that thou labourest under are for thy Good, *for all things work together for Good to them that love God* ; and though they be not for the present joyous, but grievous, yet afterwards they work the peaceable Fruits of Righteousness in them that are exercised thereby.

Rom. 8. 28.

Heb. 12.
11.

(8.) Though now thou art sad, and in a fearing Condition, (as *Israel* were when they entered into the Red-Sea) yet there is a time of Triumph and Rejoicing coming, wherein thou shalt Triumph over all thy

thy Conquered Enemies, as the *Israelites* did, when they saw the *Egyptians* that pursued them lye dead upon the Sea-shore. Thou art now in the Combat and Conflict, and that (it may be) with strong Temptations, and not only so, but even Flesh and Heart fails thee, and through Unbelief art ready to give up all for lost and gone, however art filled with Doubts and Fears, lest thou shouldest not be able to hold out to the end; but when Victory is obtained through Faith, how wilt thou then Triumph and Rejoice in him that hath given thee this Victory; nay, the lower Ebb that thy Faith hath been brought to in the Trial, the higher will thy Soul Mount in Triumph when Victory is obtained. Thy Soul then will Magnifie the Lord, and Rejoice in God thy Saviour, who hath supported thy Faith; yea, hath borne with the Infirmities and Weaknesses thereof, and hath delivered thee from the thing thou so greatly fearedst; when those that have been overcome by Sin, Satan, and Temptation, shall hang down their Heads with Sorrow and Shame, and with the greatest Amazement shall hear the most dreadful Sentence pronounced against them, *Go ye Cursed*; then shalt thou with fulness of Joy lift up thy Head, because the Day of thy Deliverance, and thy Marriage Day is come, and thou shalt hear the Voice of the Bridegroom calling, *Come ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, for ye*
have

have been faithful in a little, enter ye into the Joy of your Lord.

Luk. 12.
32.

Therefore though ye meet with manifold and great Trials and Tribulations, a vast ---- and howling Wilderness, where you meet with many Dangers and Discouragements, yet *fear not little Flock, for it is your Father's good Pleasure to give you the Kingdom.* The Victory at last will make amends for all the Difficulties that ye have waded through in the Contest. There wilt thou cry out with *Thomas* in the Text, *My Lord, and my God.*

Let me add one necessary Caution or Admonition as a Conclusion of the whole, and this with respect to particular Trials, and (as thou supposest) Victories over some strong Temptations. Thou hast been sorely tempted, and hast strongly (though with much difficulty) resisted, and (as thou thinkest) overcome them; yet be not too confident of thy Victory, but take the Psalmist's Advice, *Serve the Lord with Fear, and Rejoice with Trembling;* for thou knowest not what yet thou may'st meet with. Thou hast not yet resisted unto Blood, striving against Sin. The same, or as great Temptations, may yet assault thee as ever have done. A final and perfect Victory cannot be expected till thou comest to Heaven. Satan will be busie while thou art here in this World, and the Lust of the Flesh will be lusting against the Spirit, and thy Grace is and will be imperfect while thou art here,
and

and must be watched, and daily strengthened and renewed every Day by fresh Supplies from Christ, or else thou wilt faint, and thy very Faith fail thee. The Enemy may seem for a time to flee, and be vanquished, when only he retires for the present, that he may get greater Advantage afterward. Thy Temptation and Corruption may for a time be laid to sleep, and yet not truly and fully overcome and mortified, and this is not right Cause and Matter of Triumph. But it is the true Mortification of Sin and Lust, when it is plucked up by the Roots, and utterly cast out of thy Heart and Affections the contrary Grace planted there, that is a real Victory, and thou hast Cause to Triumph in. Some may seem to be purged from their Old Sins, and yet after a time may return to them again, as the Dog to his Vomit; therefore the Apostle adviseth us to give diligence to make our Calling and Election sure, and this by adding one Grace to another; take the Psalmist's Advice annexed to the Promise; *God will speak Peace to his People, and to his Saints, but let them not turn again to Folly*; beware therefore of Security and Self-confidence, for we have need to watch unto the very end.

Upon this Account, though the Apostle had been safely brought through many Trials and Temptations, yet they longed to be delivered from this Body of Clay, because they could not expect a full and final Victory till they had put off this Earthly Tabernacle; we read in Scripture of the Saints

2 Pet. 2.

22.

1 Pet. 1.

5, to the

12.

Psal. 85. 8.

2 Cor. 5. 1,

2, 3, 4.

Saints earnestly longing for the Appearance of Christ, and their Dissolution ; but not so much out of a natural desire of Death, but especially that they may be freed from the Body of Sin and Temptations, and that they may be ever with the Lord, and be taken into the Heavenly Rest and Society of Christ and all his Members, when they shall be no more in the Noise of Spiritual Wars, but enjoy everlasting and perfect Peace, and shall see the Lord as he is, and with that transforming Vision which shall make us like him, and Partakers of his Glory.

Rejoice therefore in the Grace of Christ which hath helped thee thus far ; but this do with Trembling, and let the Principal part of Joy be in Faith, and Hope of full Victory at last ; and let this quicken you to run with Patience the Race set before you, looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of your Faith, that ye may not grow weary, and faint in your Work ; for this Cause and Use he hath given you the Earnest of his Spirit, and hath delivered you from many and great Fears, in whom there is Everlasting Strength ; and he hath promised to keep *him in perfect Peace, whose Mind is stayed upon him, because he trusteth in him.*

F I N I S.

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Mr Joseph Moritt
Joseph Moritt

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